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DOGMATIC SERIES

BY

RODERICK MacEACHEN
Priest of Columbus Diocese

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DOGMATIC SERIES.

Vol. III.

CHAPTER I.

Divine Grace.

MAN belongs to the order of nature. This world is the sphere of his natural life and destiny. His proper aims and activities do not extend beyond the created world around him. His faculties are fitted for the needs of his life here on earth. Of himself man can not even yearn for the things of the Supernatural order.

The Supernatural is the proper sphere of God alone. No created being can even know the existence of the Supernatural world unless God reveals it to him. No creature can even desire to dwell in the realm of the

Supernatural unless prompted by God. Not even the most glorious archangel could enter Heaven without the assistance of God.

Heaven and eternal beatitude with God is man's destiny. Yet this destiny does not belong to man's nature. It is a freely given favor of God.

Man is the adopted son of God. He is not such by nature, but by God's love and benevolence. Man can attain eternal salvation, but not by his own powers alone. He can not be saved without the assistance of God. This is the meaning of divine grace.

Divine Grace it is that elevates man above his natural sphere. It bestows upon him a supernatural destiny. It makes it possible for him to reach the supernatural abode which God has prepared for him.

Man is like a shipwrecked sailor on a desert island. Left to himself, he can only wander about within the

narrow bounds of the island. He possesses no means of reaching the great world that lies beyond the ocean. A kind-hearted captain comes with a sturdy vessel. He takes him aboard, clothes him, nourishes him, comforts him, and carries him back to his home and country. Gladly the forlorn man accepts the invitation to enter the ship. Gladly he reveres and obeys this generous captain. Gladly will he perform even the most arduous labor on the way. For he longs to return to his loved ones and his inheritance.

The world is but a desert island in the wondrous ways of God. It is a place of lonely solitude. Our true home and inheritance are beyond the fathomless sea that divides the natural from the supernatural. They lie beyond the infinite expanse that separates time from eternity.

Our hearts yearn to possess the love and joy that await us in the realms of

God above. God comes to us with His divine grace and the way is open before us. Wherefore, Christ said: "No man can come to me, except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him; and I will raise him up on the last day."[1]

Christ took pity on fallen man. He came into the world to restore to him the supernatural inheritance which had been bestowed on him at his creation. It was by the blood of Christ that man could once more possess the divine grace which he had lost.

By sin human nature had been weakened and tainted. By grace it is perfected, elevated, and made "partaker of divine nature."[2] By grace man becomes a new creature. He receives, as it were, a new nature. He is like the dead restored to life. He becomes eligible to supernatural glory.

[1] St. John vi, 44.
[2] II Epistle of St. Peter i, 4.

He is endowed with new knowledge. His intellect is enlightened. "And we know that the Son of God is come; and he hath given us understanding that we may know the true God, and may be in his true Son. This is the true God and life eternal."[3]

Grace is a supernatural gift of God freely bestowed upon us to enable us to work out our salvation. All the gifts that God has bestowed upon us are graces. There are natural graces and supernatural graces. All the material benefits around us, our faculties, and our life itself are natural graces. However, the supernatural gifts of God to us are graces properly so called.

Broadly speaking, divine grace is God's favor toward us. Of ourselves we can not merit grace. We can gain God's grace through the merits of Jesus Christ alone. There are internal and external graces. The Incarnation,

[3] I Epistle of St. John v, 20.

the teaching of Christ, the moral law, the Sacraments, and the Church are some of the great external graces we have received from God.

Amongst the internal graces are the gifts of prophecy and the power of working miracles. These are extraordinary graces granted to few. The ordinary internal graces which make the soul pleasing to God are all those promptings of the heart which make us love and serve God.

Grace is also divided into actual and sanctifying grace. Actual grace consists in those special helps of God which enlighten our minds to understand the Truth and move our will to avoid evil and do good. Sanctifying grace is the special favor that dwells in the soul that is free from mortal sin. It is a condition of the soul which makes it holy and pleasing to God.

Divine grace is absolutely necessary

for salvation. St. Augustine says: "Grace, without which neither infants nor adults can be saved, is given not because of our merits, but gratuitously; for this reason it is called grace."[4]

Holy Writ testifies many times to this truth. "Who can make him clean that is conceived of unclean seed? Is it not thou, O Lord, who only art?"[5] "For all have sinned," says St. Paul, "and do need the glory of God. Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ."[6] Again he says: "By grace you are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, for it is the gift of God."[7]

If we have been faithful to God, we can but say: "By the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace in me hath not been void, but I have labored more abundantly than all they: yet

[4] De Naturaet Gratia, n. 4, Matthew 44, 249.
[5] Job xiv, 4.
[6] Epistle to the Romans iii, 23, 24.
[7] Epistle to the Ephesians ii, 8.

not I but the grace of God with me."[8] And in gratitude we can add: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with spiritual blessings in heavenly places, in Christ. . . . Unto the praise of the glory of his grace."[9]

God offers His grace to His creatures: "In me is all grace of the way and of the truth, in me is all hope of life and virtue. Come over to me, all ye that desire me and be filled with my fruits."[10] "Of his fullness we have all received," says St. John, "and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses: grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."[11] "The wages of sin is death," says the Apostle, "but the grace of God, life everlasting, in Christ Jesus our Lord."[12]

[8] I Epistle to the Corinthians xv, 10.
[9] Epistle to the Ephesians i, 3, 6.
[10] Ecclesiasticus xxiv, 25, 26.
[11] St. John i, 16, 17.
[12] Epistle to the Romans vi, 23.

CHAPTER II.

Actual Grace.

ACTUAL graces consist in illuminations of the intellect and inspirations of the will. They are God's help to us in the work of our salvation. We can not perform any act that has merit with God without actual grace. "No man can say the Lord Jesus, but by the Holy Ghost."[1] We can not even meditate upon supernatural things without God's assistance: "Not that we are sufficient to think anything of ourselves, as of ourselves: but our sufficiency is from God."[2]

Actual graces are vital actions of the intellect and will which God incites in us. Good thoughts, knowledge, admonitions, good will, good desires, charity

[1] I Epistle to the Corinthians xii, 3.
[2] II Epistle to the Corinthians iii, 5.

and love are mentioned as graces in Sacred Scripture. The grace of God prompts us to work out our destiny. These promptings must be in the intellect and will, since by these faculties we strive toward our last end. However, we can resist the grace of God. Often we feel that we are acting contrary to our inner promptings.

The grace of God works in our conscience. "And therefore, thou chastiseth them that err, by little and little: and admonisheth them, and speakest to them, concerning the things wherein they offend: that leaving their wickedness, they may believe in thee, O Lord."[3] God's grace gives us prudence: "I will show thee the way of wisdom; I will lead thee by the paths of equity."[4]

Even our infirmities and our distresses are sometimes graces. God

[3] Wisdom xii, 2.
[4] Proverbs iv, 11.

said to St. Paul: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for power is made perfect in infirmity." "Gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities," adds the Apostle, "that the power of Christ may dwell in me. For which cause I please myself in my infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am powerful."[5]

Poverty, sickness, suffering and even death may be graces for us. They may serve to turn our hearts to God. They may enable us to think more freely of eternity. In the hour of sorrow and misfortune it is often as if God said to us: "I spoke to thee in thy prosperity: and thou saidst: I will not hear."[6]

If God permits sorrows and calamities to come upon us in this life it is

[5] II Epistle to the Corinthians xii, 9, 10.
[6] Jeremias xxii, 21.

for our spiritual good. He wants to move us to love Him and to do penance. "The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed: that thou mayest love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live."[7]

Those who are true to faith and who practice charity are given many graces: "Now the grace of our Lord hath abounded exceedingly with faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus."[8] God is ever ready to bestow His graces upon us: "Behold, I stand at the gate, and knock. If any man shall hear my voice, and open to me the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."[9]

All the tribulations of life might be called graces. "The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal

[7] Deuteronomy xxx, 6.
[8] I Epistle to Timothy i, 14.
[9] Apocalypse iii, 20.

glory in Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a little, will himself perfect you, and confirm you, and establish you."[10] Even our baser passions may serve as graces to keep us humble. St. Paul says: "Lest the greatness of the revelations should exalt me, there was given me a sting of the flesh, an angel of Satan, to buffet me."[11]

The vain glory of this world may serve as a grace to make us meditate upon things spiritual: "I count all things to be but loss for the excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as dung, that I may gain Christ."[12]

God often turns great scandals into graces for us. When good men fall it is a warning against pride and presumption. The Apostle says: "Where-

[10] I Epistle of St. Peter v, 10.
[11] II Epistle to the Corinthians xii, 7.
[12] Epistle to the Philippians iii, 8.

fore, he that thinketh himself to stand, let him take heed lest he fall."[13]

Even disease and misery that so often result from sin are graces. They are intended to make men realize the wickedness of sin. "Say not: I have sinned, and what harm hath befallen me?"[14] The sudden death of sinners is often a grace to us. It makes us feel the danger of being cast into hell. It terrifies us, and impels us to do penance. "And say not: The mercy of the Lord is great, he will have mercy on the multitude of my sins. For mercy and wrath quickly come from him, and his wrath looketh upon sinners."[15]

It is a terrible thing to refuse the graces which God offers to us. God prompts many to do His holy will. He gives them the means of learning His holy teachings. He sends His ministers to preach to them. He has

[13] I Epistle to the Corinthians x, 12.
[14] Ecclesiasticus v, 4. [15] Ecclesiasticus v, 6, 7.

established His Church to guide them. He moves their hearts to seek and accept the true Faith. Yet they remain cold and indifferent.

To such as these He says: "Because I called, and you refused: I stretched out my hand, and there was none that regarded. You have despised all my counsel, and have neglected my reprehensions. I also will laugh in your destruction, and will mock when that shall come to you which you feared. When sudden calamity shall fall on you, and destruction, as a tempest, shall be at hand: when tribulation and distress shall come upon you: then shall they call upon me, and I will not hear: they shall rise in the morning, and shall not find me: because they have hated instruction, and received not the fear of the Lord, nor consented to my counsel, but despised all my reproof."[16]

[16] Proverbs i, 24-30.

CHAPTER III.

The Power of Actual Grace.

ALL men receive sufficient grace to enable them to work out their salvation. God does not withold His grace even from His bitterest enemies. In this appears the infinitude of God's love and mercy. At the very moment in which the most hardened sinner is cursing Him God gives him the grace to repent.

No man can sink so low into the degradation of sin that God will not stoop down to him and offer him the grace to return to Him. God says to the sinner: "Be converted, and do penance for all your iniquities: and iniquity shall not be your ruin."[1] God gives grace to the unbeliever that

[1] Ezechiel xviii, 30.

he may believe. He gives grace to the unfaithful that they may become faithful. He gives grace to the impure that they may become pure.

God always leaves the will of man free. He does not force man to do good. God prompts us to good by His graces. He moves the mind and will. But He always leaves us free to resist. God does not necessarily inflame our hearts with love and joy when He gives us His graces. Nor does He always give feelings of consolation and satisfaction to those who do good. Often when God is heaping graces upon us, our soul is gloomy and sad.

No one need despair of God's grace. There is no moment in the life of any rational creature in which God refuses to bestow His grace upon him. It sometimes seems that God refuses to grant the grace to avoid sin. Yet when the penitent sinner relapses into

sin, it is never through a lack of God's grace. It is because he has neglected to use the graces God has given him.

He who knows the love of God, can never doubt His mercy. He need never fear that God will abandon him. God is waiting as a loving father for the moment when our hearts are disposed to receive more graces from Him.

Man can become obstinate and hardened in sin. He may disregard all the better promptings of the heart. He may glory in his wickedness. He may refuse to accept God's grace. Yet God does not abandon him. He is ever ready to bestow His grace upon him. He says to him: "If your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow: and if they be red as crimson, they shall be white as wool. If you be willing, and will hearken to me, you shall eat the good things of the land."[2]

We know that God does not exclude

[2] Isaias i, 18, 19.

anyone from His grace. Indeed He "will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth."[3] No sinner is shut out entirely from God's grace, else Christ could not have died for all men. Says St. John: "Jesus Christ the just is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world."[4]

The same Apostle calls Christ "the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world."[5]

However, many have never known this Light. There is a countless multitude of unbelievers in the world. St. John Chrysostom says: "If He enlightens every man that comes into this world, why then are there so many without the light? There are indeed many who do not know Christ.

[3] I Epistle to Timothy ii, 4.
[4] I Epistle of St. John ii, 1, 2.
[5] St. John i, 9.

How then does He enlighten every man?

"Indeed He does His part to enlighten them. If some close their eyes to the light, it is not the fault of the light that they are in darkness. It is because they have made themselves unworthy of so great a gift by maliciously refusing to accept it. For grace is given to all. It does not disdain Jew, nor Greek, nor barbarian, nor Scythian, nor freeman, nor slave, nor man, nor woman, nor old, nor young. It shows itself readily to all. It honors all alike. Those who neglect to enjoy its bounty must impute their blindness to themselves."[6]

Even those to whom the Gospel has never been preached, receive sufficient grace for salvation. They are called negative unbelievers. They have never resisted the grace of God as do positive unbelievers. The Church condemned

[6] In Joannem hom. 8, Migne P. G. Tom. 59, c. 65.

the opinion that pagans, Jews, heretics and other unbelievers are deprived of sufficient grace to enable them to undertake the work of salvation.[7] The Church also condemned the following propositions: "No graces are given outside the Church."[8] "No graces are given except through Faith."[9]

God provides for those to whom the Gospel has never been preached. He gives them grace so that they can prepare themselves for faith. Perhaps, by His supernatural help, He gives them positive disposition to faith. If they do not resist grace God will, if necessary, work a miracle to save them.

Whilst God gives sufficient grace to all, He does not give equal graces to all. There is a great diversity of external graces. Christians receive many

[7] Denzinger, Enchiridion, n. 1162.
[8] Denzinger, n. 1241.
[9] Denzinger 27.

more graces than unbelievers. Some sinners have a priest at their deathbed. Others die without the last Sacraments. It is the same also for internal graces. Some infants receive baptism. Others die without it. The Blessed Virgin and the Apostles received graces such as no others ever obtained.

God gives grace to persevere to the end. This is called the grace of perseverance. It is a great gift of God and a special favor of His divine bounty. Many fall from grace and are lost. "He that shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved."[10] No one can be certain of his salvation. However, the uncertainty comes from man himself and not from God.

Salvation is uncertain because man is not sure that he will remain true to God. He is not sure that he will make

[10] St. Matthew x, 22.

use of the graces God will give him. It is a dogma of Faith that we can not persevere to the end without the special help of God. "As for the gift of perseverance, of which it is written: He that shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved. This gift can not be obtained except from Him who is able to make the one that stands firm stand perseveringly, and to sit on his feet the one that falls. Let no one promise himself a given thing with absolute certainty, though all should place the firmest hope in the help of God. For God, unless they fail to correspond to His grace, will perfect the good work which He has begun."[11]

God continues to give us new graces as long as we strive to use the graces we have received. Wherefore, we must work out our salvation with fear and trembling. Each of us may well

[11] Council of Trent, sess. 6, c. 13.

say: "Neither is my house so grea
with God, that he should make wit
me an eternal covenant, firm in a
things and assured. For he is all m
salvation, and all my will."[12]

[12] II Kings xxiii, 5.

CHAPTER IV.

The Sacramental Life of the Church.

THOSE who are faithful members of Holy Church lead a truly sacramental life. The true Christian life is built upon the grace of the seven Sacraments. Christ instituted the seven Sacraments to supply to those who believe in Him, spiritual help in their every need.

Holy Church is a tender mother to us. The Sacraments are the means by which she guides and nourishes us unto eternal life. The Sacraments supply the grace necessary for every step that we take in our journey through life. Soon after birth we receive the Sacrament of Baptism. This frees us from the hereditary taint

of Adam's sin. It makes us children of God and heirs of heaven.

As we grow up in childhood we receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. It strengthens us in the struggle against Satan. We receive the Sacrament of Penance to heal our souls from the wounds of sin. The Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist is the food for our souls. It is the Bread from Heaven, that nourishes us throughout life.

In our last hours the Sacrament of Extreme Unction fortifies us for our final struggle against the powers of darkness. The Sacrament of Matrimony insures the well-being of society. For marriage is the foundation of human society. The Sacrament of Holy Orders insures the perpetuity of Holy Church. It provides ministers of the altar to continue the work of the Apostles to the end. Thus the welfare of the individual of the Church and of

society depends upon the seven Sacraments.

When the Sacraments are administered to us they are actions of Christ in our souls. Their effect comes solely from Christ Himself. Through them we come, as it were, in direct physical communication with Christ. They are the superabundant means provided by Infinite Love to bring us into closest union with our divine Saviour. Salvation is the work of God, not of man. Hence, the means by which it is brought into each individual soul must be of divine institution. It must also be in keeping with divine wisdom.

God provides abundantly for our material life in this world. He implanted love for us in the hearts of our parents. Thus they might care for us in the helplessness of our infancy. He has filled the earth about us with all that is necessary to feed and clothe us. He has stored away in the recesses

of nature the remedies that can cure and alleviate our ailments. He has given us water, air, and sunshine to keep us in health. He has given us minerals from which to make utensils and weapons to serve us in the struggle of life.

It can not be supposed that God would be less generous in providing for our spiritual life. The same struggle is here that we find in the material life. Man must use his faculties to live his natural life. God does not put the food into his stomach. Nor does He make clothing grow upon his back.

It is thus in the spiritual life. God does not thrust salvation upon the individual. He provides it abundantly for all. Yet each must use his own faculties to be saved. The Sacraments are the channels through which God's spiritual abundance comes to us. Though this bounty is of a higher order it is not more wonderful than the

material bounty which God has bestowed upon us.

It is indeed a mystery how the Sacraments can produce grace in our souls. They are physical signs and yet they produce a spiritual effect. Yet it is no less mysterious how material food can nourish our bodies. If we consume a cup of oatmeal it nourishes us. But there is no nutriment in a like amount of sawdust. Science could tell this, but it could not give the reason why it should be so.

This we know. God made all things. He fashioned them after His Own divine ideas.

It is but fitting that Christ should have conveyed the grace of salvation to us through the Sacraments. They are suitable instruments for the God-man. Had He given us His grace through purely spiritual means alone, He would not have followed out the idea of the Incarnation. Christ re-

deemed the world through the instrumentality of a human body. Hence, it seems but proper that He should have used external signs as the medium for conveying His grace to our souls. Had He redeemed us in a purely spiritual manner we might have expected that His grace would come to us through spiritual means alone.

Christ was not content to die for us. He wished to accompany each of us through life. "My delight," He says, "is to be with the children of men."[1] It was with this in view that He instituted the seven Sacraments. His sacred humanity was the instrument by which He united us with His Heavenly Father. The Sacraments are the instruments by which He unites us to His sacred humanity.

This He explains in that beautiful simile: "I am the vine; you are the branches. He that abideth in me, and

[1] Proverbs viii, 31.

I in him, he beareth much fruit. As the branch can not bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in me; for without me you can do nothing."[2] As the sap flows from the vine into the branches that are united to it, so the Blood of Christ flows through the Sacraments into our hearts. For they are the bond of unity between us and Him.

Cold and comfortless indeed would be the Church without the seven Sacraments. Our Faith would give us little consolation without these seven fountains of grace. Without the Sacraments the New Law would possess no superiority over the Old Dispensation. In vain would Christ have been called Emmanuel, God with us.

But Christ became a God with us at His Incarnation. He walked amongst men for a few years in Pales-

[2] St. John xv, 4, 5.

tine. Yet He did not intend that His personal presence amongst those who lived there at that time was to suffice for us all. He decreed that He would dwell personally in the midst of all men unto the end of time. This He does through the Sacraments.

By Baptism we become adopted children of God and co-heirs of Heaven with Christ. By Confirmation the Holy Ghost dwells within us to make us soldiers of Christ. By Penance we are restored to friendship with God when sin separates us from Him. In the Holy Eucharist Christ becomes in reality God with us. He dwells really and truly upon our altars. But not satisfied with being near us, He comes to dwell in our very breast. At Holy Communion we receive our living Saviour into our very bodies.

It is only the angels of Heaven that can bear witness to the tears of joy that have fallen from sinful eyes

through the Sacrament of Penance. He alone who knows the dismal misery of sin can tell the transports of joy that fill the penitent heart when the hand of the priest is raised in sacramental absolution. Then those faithful children of the Faith who kneel often at the altar to receive their Saviour in their bosom could tell of that peace which the world can not give.

But stand by the deathbed of a loved one. There the consolation of the Sacraments appears in its tenderest form. Fortified by a threefold sacramental grace the dying Christian may well close his eyes in peace. He bears his God within him. His very God is his Viaticum, his Food for the journey to eternity.

CHAPTER V.

The Sacraments.

A SACRAMENT is an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace. It is a sign which signifies what it effects, and effects what it signifies. Sacraments are the chief means bestowed upon us for gaining the grace of Christ.

God can deal with us in a twofold manner. He can commune directly with our soul in a spiritual manner. He can also deal with us through the medium of external signs and symbols. Since we are composed of both body and soul the ordinary means of intercourse with us is through the senses.

In this life our intellect and will act through the medium of the senses. It is through our intellect and will

that we work out our salvation. Hence, it is but fitting that God should have given us means of salvation that appeal to our intellect and will in the ordinary way. This He does in the seven Sacraments.

Christ instituted the seven Sacraments out of love for man. He knew man's nature. He knew that man would wish to know that he had received His grace. We can gain the grace of Christ indeed by prayer and internal illuminations of the intellect and inspirations of the will. Yet we are never certain when this grace has been bestowed upon us. If prayer had been the only means of grace we should be left in continual doubt and uncertainty. We should never know whether or not we had received Christ's grace.

But the Sacraments appeal to the whole man. The internal work of grace in our soul is brought about by

external signs. When we receive a Sacrament with the right dispositions we know that we have received the special grace which it is intended to give. If we place no obstacle in the way, the Sacraments always give grace.

It is a special mark of divine love that grace should be given us in a manner suited to our nature. Human nature demands external expression of all interior sentiments. All the sentiments of the human heart have their external signs and expressions. We are not satisfied with love and friendship that are not manifested outwardly. Christ knew this. Hence, it was that He gave us the Sacraments. For this reason He gave us these sacred signs which He had filled with the power of conveying His grace to our souls.

Life is one great complexus of signs and symbols. All our intercourse with our fellow men is based upon signs and symbols. The natural life of man

is an analogy of his spiritual life. Indeed there seems to be one great underlying idea in all creation. It pervades all material, physical and spiritual life. Everything points to God. Everything is a sign that indicates the love and omnipotence of our Creator. It would have been strange indeed had Christ ignored this universal principle in His plan of Redemption.

Christ loves with an eternal love. By His Incarnation He became a member of our race. His divine heart is filled with human sympathy toward us. He possesses the fullness of our nature. He knows its longings and its desires. He understands its weakness and its infirmities. In His love He could not forget the needs of that nature which He had taken upon Himself. He could not have established a Redemption plan that would have no outward expression. His very

Incarnation was a manifestation of Him. He completed the work of Salvation upon Calvary's cross where all might see.

During His earthly life Christ ordinarily exercised His divine power through external signs. His miracles were generally accompanied by some external ceremony. When He restored sight to a certain blind man, "He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and spread the clay upon his eyes, and said to him: Go, wash in the pool of Siloe."[1] When He raised the daughter of Jairus to life, "taking the damsel by the hand, he saith to her: Talitha cumi, which is being interpreted: Damsel (I say to thee) arise."[2] When He cured St. Peter's mother-in-law, "He touched her hand and the fever left her."[3] When He

[1] St. John ix, 6, 7.
[2] St. Mark v, 41.
[3] St. Matthew viii, 15.

multiplied the loaves and fishes, He, "taking the seven loaves and the fishes, and giving thanks, he brake and gave to his disciples."[4] When He bestowed the power of forgiving sins on His Apostles, "He breathed on them, and said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them."[5]

All these might have been accomplished without any external signs or symbols. Christ showed on several occasions that He could produce these supernatural effects without external ceremonies. He healed the Centurion's servant at a distance, "And Jesus said to the Centurion: Go, and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And the servant was healed at the same hour."[6]

Christ could have performed all

[4] St. Matthew xv, 36.
[5] St. John xx, 22, 23.
[6] St. Matthew viii, 13.

these miracles by a mere act of His divine will. Yet He had compassion on human nature. He wanted to show to human eyes the connection that existed between His wish and the effect produced. He wanted to make faith easier for them. He wanted us to understand that out of love for us He would perform His divine work in our souls after a human manner.

Christ chose men to be the ministers of His grace. This made it almost necessary for Him to establish a sacramental system in His Church. Without the Sacraments Christ's ministers could scarcely have been more than exhortors. In vain would St. Paul have said: "Let a man so account of us as the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God."[7] Christ said to His Apostles: "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you."[8]

[7] I Epistle to the Corinthians iv, 1.
[8] St. John xx, 21.

The Apostles were to continue the mission of Christ.

At the Last Supper, Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist. Here He certainly used signs and ceremonies, "Jesus took bread and blessed and broke: and gave to his disciples, and said: Take ye, and eat: This is my body. And taking the chalice, he gave thanks, and gave to them, saying: drink ye all of this. For this is my blood."[9] Then He said to them: "Do this for a commemoration of me."[10]

That this was not an empty symbol, St. Paul testifies, "The chalice of benediction, which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord?"[11]

[9] St. Matthew xxvi, 26-28.
[10] St. Luke xxii, 19.
[11] I Epistle to the Corinthians x, 16.

One example is sufficient to show that Christ did not intend to make His Apostles mere exhorters. Yet the New Testament abounds in passages which show that the Apostles carried on their ministry according to a sacramental system. "Then Peter answered: Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized? . . . And he commanded them to be baptized."[12] "Then they laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost."[13]

There were no Sacraments, properly speaking, in the Old Law. However, circumcision is called a Sacrament. Yet it did not convey grace of itself. It was a sign of faith in the Messias to come. Through circumcision and the faith of their parents, children could be saved. Through sacred signs and symbols the chosen people professed

[12] Acts of the Apostles x, 47, 48.
[13] Acts of the Apostles viii, 17.

their belief in the future Redeemer. These signs signified grace, but did not produce it in the soul.

The Church of Christ is a visible society. As such, it must have visible means to carry out its mission. It was established to minister the grace of Christ to all men. Hence it is but fitting that Christ should have instituted a sacramental system. The Sacraments are the means not only of professing our faith in Christ, but also of bringing His grace into our souls.

Christ did not intend that one man's salvation should depend on the sanctity of another. Hence He gave us Sacraments which confer grace of themselves. The grace of the Sacraments does not depend on the sanctity or character of the minister. A man may be as wicked as Satan, an unbeliever like Julian, or a traitor like Judas, and yet administer the Sacraments validly. It is Christ Who

administers by his hand. The Sacraments do not lose any of their power and grace though they be administered by one whose soul is black with sin.

There are two parts to every Sacrament. There is matter and there is form. The matter is the external sign, such as the pouring of water in Baptism. The form is the words used in conferring the Sacrament. Thus in Baptism: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." If either of these two parts is lacking or incomplete the Sacrament is not valid.

The seven Sacraments are all mentioned in the Bible. They have been in use since the days of the Apostles. There has been no development of Sacraments in the Church. Christ alone can institute a Sacrament. It is sometimes said that the Sacraments were not all known to the early Church. The Sacraments were known and used.

Yet they may not have been so clearly defined in all their details and ceremonies. When later they were contested by heretics, they were more clearly explained and the laws governing their administration were more fully set down.

The Council of Trent declares that the Church can not change the substance of the Sacraments: "The Church has always had the power, in the administration of the Sacraments, to decide and change those things which serve the utility of those who receive them, or to increase veneration for the Sacraments themselves, as the circumstances of time and place may suggest. Yet the substance must ever remain intact."[14]

Christ established but seven Sacraments. The Council of Trent says: "If anyone shall say that not all the

[14] Session xxi, cap. 2.

Sacraments of the New Law were instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ, or that there are more or fewer than seven, namely: Baptism, Confirmation, Penance, Holy Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders and Matrimony, or that any one of these is not truly and properly a Sacrament, let him be anathema."[15]

It is sometimes said that the washing of feet was once held as a Sacrament in the Church. Some of the early Fathers wrote obscurely of this ceremony. It is a sacramental. As such it can remit venial sin. It simply signifies the practice of humility. This is the lesson that Christ wished to teach the Apostles when He washed their feet. Some find a difficulty in the words: "He that is washed, needeth not but to wash his feet, but is clean wholly."[16] It was the custom in

[15] Session vii, can. i.
[16] St. John xiii, 10.

those days to take a bath before supper. Hence, it was but necessary to wash the dust from the feet, after coming, and the whole body was clean.

Baptism and Penance are called Sacraments of the dead. The soul that is in mortal sin is said to be dead. Mortal sin is spiritual death. These two Sacraments were instituted to restore the souls of sinners to the life of grace. They confer sanctifying grace.

Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders and Matrimony are called Sacraments of the living. They are intended for those who are in the state of sanctifying grace. The soul that possesses grace is said to be living. For this reason these five Sacraments are called Sacraments of the living. They increase sanctifying grace in the soul. To receive them worthily we must be free from mortal sin. To receive one of

those Sacraments in mortal sin would be a sacrilege.

Each of the Sacraments bestows special grace. They are not all equal. Nor do they all confer the same grace. Three Sacraments, Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders, imprint a character on the soul. This character can never be effaced. It remains on the soul forever.

The Sacraments are not mere conditions for the reception of grace. They are causes of grace. They possess in themselves the power of bringing divine grace into our souls. It is Christ Himself Who works in our souls in and through the Sacraments. He is our Lord and Savior. He bestows His gifts upon us by the hands of His ministers.

In the administration of the Sacraments, Christ is the principal agent. Priests and bishops act in the name of Christ. They are His instruments.

The Sacraments have their efficacy from Christ. They are given to the ministry of the Church. Thus God has placed these great means of grace in our midst.

CHAPTER VI.

The Subject of the Sacraments.

THE Sacraments were instituted for human beings during their life on earth. The Sacraments were not intended for angels. Nor were they intended for man in the next life. Much less were they intended for irrational creatures. Since the Sacraments are means of grace they are given to fallen man to enable him to work out his salvation. Furthermore, the Sacraments are intended for all men. They were not instituted for any select or predestined number of men. Yet not every man can receive all the Sacraments.

All are bound to make use of the Sacraments as a means of salvation.

Certain Sacraments are necessary means of salvation. Baptism is necessary for all. Penance is necessary for those who have fallen into mortal sin after they were baptized. If it is impossible to receive these Sacraments their principal effect can be obtained by an act of perfect love.

God supplies the necessary grace. These Sacraments are necessary only because God wills it. Hence God can confer the grace without the Sacraments when it is impossible to comply with His will. The grace of any other Sacraments that may be necessary for salvation can be obtained by an act of perfect love.

Adults can not receive the Sacraments validly without having the intention to do so. This intention need not be explicit or clearly defined. It suffices if a person have the intention of receiving what the Church confers for his salvation.

A person may receive certain Sacraments validly, even though he receive them unworthily. Yet he does not gain the grace they should convey to him. He places an obstacle in the way of receiving this grace because he has not the proper dispositions. However, this grace may be sometimes revived later in his soul if he put himself in the proper disposition and remove the obstacle. Thus these Sacraments are said to revive. If a person has received a Sacrament of the living in mortal sin, its grace is restored to him after he has received absolution for his sacrilege and all his other sins.

He who receives the Sacrament of Penance unworthily loses the grace of the Sacrament. Its grace never revives. He must receive the Sacrament again to obtain sanctifying grace. An adult who receives Baptism without contrition for his actual sins does not receive the grace of the Sacrament.

This grace may be later revived in his soul by an act of contrition. If, however, he has fallen into mortal sin he must receive sacramental absolution for this sin. The effect of Baptism then revives in his soul the moment he receives the Sacrament of Penance.

Faith, above all, is necessary for a worthy reception of the Sacraments. However, it is not necessary to elicit an act of faith at the moment in which the Sacrament is received. Habitual faith suffices. "Without faith we can not please God."[1]

Repentance for sin is absolutely necessary. If we are in sin we must repent before we can receive any Sacrament worthily. "Do penance, and be baptized every one of you."[2]

An excommunicated person is not permitted to receive any of the Sacraments until he has been absolved from the censure of the Church.

[1] Epistle to the Hebrews xi, 6. [2] Acts of the Apostles ii, 38.

To receive the Sacraments of the living worthily we must be in the state of grace. To receive one of these Sacraments in mortal sin is a grave sacrilege.

It is not permitted to seek the Sacraments from the hands of a priest who can not licitly administer them, except in case of extreme necessity. Thus, it would not be allowed to seek the Sacraments from a suspended priest except when no other priest can be obtained and there is imminent danger of death.

CHAPTER VII.

The Ministers of the Sacraments.

CHRIST is the chief minister of all the Sacraments. Everyone that administers a Sacrament does so in the name of Christ. Those alone who have been ordained by Christ and His Church can fulfil this divine ministry on earth. Thus priests and bishops are the ordinary ministers of the Sacraments. Christ committed the Sacraments to His Church. Hence, none other than the rightful ministers of the Church have power and authority to dispense them.

There are five Sacraments which are always administered by a priest or bishop. They are: Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction and Holy Orders. Baptism may be

administered by anyone in case of necessity. A lay person who baptizes is not acting as a consecrated minister. He is like a deputy who simply performs a work in the absence of the ordinary minister.

Matrimony is also an exception, because it is so necessary for society. The contracting parties themselves administer the Sacrament of Matrimony. The priest is the official witness of the marriage contract. He safeguards the form and validity of the Sacrament in the name of the Church.

The effect and validity of the Sacraments in no way depend upon the faith or righteousness of those who administer them. The ministers of the Sacraments act in the name and person of Christ. Hence their sacramental actions have power and efficacy from Christ. The priest or bishop who confers a Sacrament is an instrument in the hand of Christ. It is Christ,

then, who performs the action. Since He is omnipotent, He can effect this great work of divine grace even through the most imperfect instrument.

A beggar can bear gifts of gold from a king to the poor. A starving mother may nourish her little ones. A physician may cure his patients though he be afflicted with a mortal disease. For his knowledge of medicine is not in his diseased body, but in his mind. So a man may be suffering from the spiritual evils of sin and unbelief and yet heal the spiritual wounds of others. For the power of healing souls is not inherent in the man, but in God.

A priest may lose his Faith, and yet he can administer the Sacraments validly. A man may be an infidel, a heretic, or an atheist at heart, and yet he may validly fulfil Christ's commands. This is clear from the fact that the Church will not rebaptize

those who have been validly baptized by heretics.

He who administers the Sacraments licitly must be in the state of grace. It is a grave sin for anyone to administer a Sacrament whilst he is in mortal sin.

God demands special sanctity on the part of His ministers. Their ministerial actions are virtually the actions of Christ. They are consecrated and deputed in a special manner to dispense the sacred mysteries. Hence they are bound to live lives of holiness in order to administer the Sacraments in a becoming manner.

He who administers a Sacrament must have at least the intention of doing what the Church does. It is not sufficient if he merely confers the external rite without attaching any special meaning to it. He must intend to do what is implied in the Sacrament. A man may not know the

meaning of Baptism, yet he could baptize validly if he simply intended to do what Christians intend when they baptize.

He who administers a Sacrament should be attentive to what he is doing. Yet the Sacrament is valid even though he is distracted whilst conferring it. To use the matter and form of a Sacrament for the sake of ridicule would never constitute a valid dispensation of a Sacrament. Thus two persons might go through the whole marriage ceremony as a joke. They would not be really married, even if all other conditions were present, so long as the internal intention was wanting.

Under certain conditions priests and bishops are strictly bound to administer the Sacraments. This may be an obligation either of charity or of justice. All those who are entrusted with the care of souls are bound in justice to

administer the Sacraments to those of their subjects who seek them worthily. This obligation of justice does not arise from any salary or stipends that they may receive. The Sacraments are never licitly administered for a price. The obligation arises from a serious pact into which they entered by assuming an office the object of which is to bring salvation to men.

In grave necessity pastors of souls are bound to give their life for the salvation of souls. They are the Good Shepherds. They can not flee in time of danger without being false to their duty. They are bound to administer the Sacraments to their subjects no matter what may befall them. That is, they are bound to administer those Sacraments that may be necessary for salvation. Ordinarily these are Baptism, Penance and Extreme Unction. No pastor would be bound to risk his life to enable one of

his subjects to communicate out of devotion.

Even though not bound by justice a priest or bishop would be bound by the law of charity to administer the Sacraments in case of extreme necessity. He would be obliged to do this even though he suffered great inconvenience thereby. All men are under grave obligation to help their neighbor in extreme necessity.

Priests and bishops are also bound to refuse the Sacraments to the unworthy. Those who have not the proper dispositions are unworthy. Those who are in mortal sin are unworthy of receiving the Sacraments of the living. However, a priest can not publicly deny the Sacraments to hidden sinners. He may know from the confessional that a person is guilty of heinous sin, and yet he dare not refuse him the Sacraments if he openly seeks them. "Thus," says St. Thomas,

"Christ did not deny Judas Holy Communion at the Last Supper."[1] A hidden sinner may be excluded from the Sacrament of Holy Orders. However, even here it is not permitted to use information acquired in the confessional.

Public sinners are to be denied the Sacraments, even though they seek them privately. The excommunicated, public prostitutes, those who live in concubinage, usurers, fortune-tellers, are considered public sinners. They are not to be admitted to the Sacraments unless they have repented and repaired the public scandal of which they were the cause.

He who lives a life of public sin can not suffer in his reputation by being denied the Sacraments. A bishop or priest is not permitted to administer the Sacraments to the unworthy, even to save his own life. If he were ordered

[1] Summa Theologica 3 q. 81 a. 2.

under penalty of death to confer a Sacrament on an unworthy person he would be nevertheless obliged to refuse it. For it is never permitted to do evil that good may come of it.

It is not permitted to simulate the administration of a Sacrament to avoid a sacrilege. This would be deception. Simulation consists of conferring the external rite of the Sacrament and, at the same time, omitting something essential. This omission is made so as not to be noticed by others. However, it would not be simulation of the Sacrament if the priest should pray and give his blessing to one who, for some reason, could not receive sacramental absolution.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Sacrament of Baptism.

BAPTISM is the Sacrament which cleanses us from original sin and makes us Christians, children of God and heirs of Heaven. Baptism also takes away all actual sins of which the person baptized may be guilty. It furthermore remits both the eternal and the temporal punishment due to these sins.

Baptism is the first Sacrament that we receive. We are not Christians until we are baptized. Thus no other Sacrament can be received before Baptism.

Christ instituted the Sacrament of Baptism. This He undoubtedly did before His passion. The disciples of Jesus baptized whilst they were yet

with Him. "Jesus himself did not baptize, but his disciples."[1] This could not have been the baptism of John. For "there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews concerning purification: and they came to John, and said . . . he that was with thee beyond the Jordan, to whom thou gavest testimony, behold he baptizeth."[2] Christ baptized through His disciples.

The baptism of John was not a Sacrament of the New Law. It did not have the power of taking away sins. Those who were baptized by John had to receive the Sacrament of Baptism if they wished to become Christians. When St. Paul found certain disciples at Ephesus, he asked them: "In what then were you baptized? Who said: In John's baptism. Then Paul said: John baptized the people with the

[1] St. John iv, 2.
[2] St. John iii, 25, 26.

baptism of penance, saying: That they should believe in him who was to come after him, that is to say, in Jesus. Having heard these things, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."[3] St. John the Baptist knew this difference, for he said: "I indeed baptize you in water unto penance, but he that shall come after me is mightier than I . . . he shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost and fire."[4]

St. Thomas says: "The baptism of John was not of itself a Sacrament. It was a kind of sacramental which disposed people for the Baptism of Christ."[5] Christ received the baptism of John. He could well receive a sacramental. The Holy One of God needed not the Baptism unto the remission of sins. He received the Baptism of Penance because He had taken our sins upon Himself.

[3] Acts of the Apostles xix, 3-5. [4] St. Matthew iii, 11.
[5] Summa Theologica, 3 q., 38 ad. 1.

St. Ambrose says: "The Lord was baptized, not because He wished to be cleansed, but to cleanse the waters so that, cleansed through the flesh of Christ, which never knew sin, they might have the right of baptism."[6] St. John Chrysostom expresses the same idea: "The cleansing of the water is not to be understood as a change in the quality of the water. It refers to the destiny of the water which is to become the matter of the Sacrament."[7]

After His Resurrection Christ commanded the Apostles to baptize not only the Jews, but also the Gentiles. Said He to them: "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."[8] After the descent of the Holy Ghost on

[6] In Luc., chap. III, p. 38.
[7] In Matth., hom. 12, n. 3.
[8] St. Matthew xxviii, 19.

Pentecost, the Apostles immediately went forth on their mission. On the very first day they baptized a great multitude: "They therefore that received his word, were baptized; and there were added in that day about three thousand souls."[9]

St. Philip was riding in a chariot with a certain eunuch, whom he had instructed. When they came to where there was water, the eunuch asked to be baptized. "And they went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch: and he baptized him."[10] At the preaching of St. Paul, "many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized."[11] The Apostle could say later: "In one spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles."[12]

[9] Acts of the Apostles ii, 41.
[10] Acts of the Apostles viii, 38.
[11] Acts of the Apostles xviii, 8.
[12] I Epistle to the Corinthians xii, 13.

After his conversion St. Paul was baptized by Ananias: "Rise up," he says, "and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, invoking his name."[13] The Apostles clearly taught the remission of sins in Baptism. St. Peter said to the Jews: "Do penance, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins."[14] St. Paul says: "As many of you as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ."[15]

The same Apostle says: "We that are dead to sin, how shall we live any longer therein? Know ye not that all we, who are baptized in Jesus Christ, are baptized in his death? For we are buried together with him by baptism unto death: that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in

[13] Acts of the Apostles xxii, 16.
[14] Acts of the Apostles ii, 38.
[15] Epistle to the Galatians iii, 27.

newness of life."[16] And again he says Christ sanctified His Church, "Cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life."[17]

Baptism takes away all the punishment for sins that have been committed. It restores man to the state of purity which he enjoyed before the fall. However, it does not take away the effects of original sin. It does not remove the darkness of the intellect and the weakness of the will. Thus the effects of original sin remain after Baptism. "The salvation of man is wrought in Baptism," says St. Augustine, "because Baptism takes away everything sinful that he has contracted from his first parents and also the sins he himself has previously committed."[18]

Again the same holy Doctor says:

[16] Epistle to the Romans vi, 2, 4.
[17] Epistle to the Ephesians v, 26.
[18] Contra duas ep. Pelag. 1, 3; n. 5.

"Baptism cleanses from all sins, both original and actual; all words, deeds, thoughts, whether known or unknown are remitted."[19]

The Council of Florence decrees: "The effect of this Sacrament (Baptism) is the remission of all sin both original and actual and also of all punishment due to these sins."[20]

The Council of Trent affirms the same doctrine: "If anyone shall say that the guilt of original sin is not remitted through the grace of Jesus Christ that is conferred in Baptism, or shall assert that anything of sin is left—that sin is simply smoothed off, or not imputed, let him be anathema."[21]

Baptism does more than remit sin. It infuses habits of grace and virtue into the soul. "In justification itself with the remission of sin," says the

[19] Contra duas ep. Pelag. 1, 3; n. 5.
[20] Denzinger, n. 591.
[21] Session 5, can. 5.

Council of Trent, "man receives through Jesus Christ to whom he is bound all these gifts of faith, hope and charity."[22] Baptism also imprints an indelible character or mark on the soul. He who is baptized is stamped as a Christian forever. He is sealed, as it were, with the sign of Christ.

By Baptism we become living members of Christ's mystical body. That is, we become members of His Church. "We are all baptized into one body," says the Apostle . . . "now you are the body of Christ and members of member."[23]

As members of Christ we are heirs of Heaven with Him. Baptism unites us with Christ and makes us children of God. It confers many actual graces upon us. Through its grace we are enabled to live the true Christian life.

[22] Denzinger, 682.
[23] Epistle to the Romans xii, 12.

Baptism can not be received more than once. It is a regeneration, a spiritual birth. Once born we can not be born again in the same manner. Once born children of God we can not be born children of God a second time.

CHAPTER IX.

The Necessity of Baptism.

BAPTISM is necessary for all men as a means of salvation. Christ Himself declared: "Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he can not enter into the kingdom of heaven."[1] To enter into the Kingdom of Heaven means to become a member of Christ's visible Church. It also means to become heir to eternal glory.

Christ instituted the Sacrament of Baptism as a spiritual birth, a regeneration unto eternal life. We can not possess physical life without physical birth. It is then also reasonable to say that we can not obtain supernatural life without supernatural birth. Christ

[1] St. John iii, 5.

was free to choose any means whatsoever for our salvation.

In the early Church, Holy Saturday and the Saturday before Pentecost were set aside for the solemn administration of Baptism. Yet in case of necessity Baptism was conferred any day or at any hour, as it is today.

Some find difficulty in the words of St. Paul: "The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife."[2] They claim that there is in this an argument against the necessity of Baptism. Yet there is no question of Baptism here. St. Paul does not mean that the husband receives sanctifying grace from his wife. He wishes to say that the marriage in question receives its legal validity from the believing wife. For he is speaking about marriage and not about grace.

Baptism is necessary for salvation. Yet it is possible to be saved, under

[2] I Epistle to the Corinthians vii, 14.

certain conditions, without Baptism. It is possible to be saved by a desire for Baptism. This is called Baptism of Desire. It confers sanctifying grace on the soul. It is an act of perfect love by which a person wishes to do all that God wants him to do.

He may never have learned that there is a Sacrament of Baptism. Yet the wish to do the will of God in all things includes the wish to receive this Sacrament. Hence he can profit by Baptism of Desire though he knows not the meaning of a Sacrament. Christ has said that love shall save us: "He that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."[3]

The doctrine of the Church concerning Baptism of Desire is very consoling. It opens the door of salvation to many sincere souls who die without Baptism. It also quiets the

[3] St. John xiv, 21.

hearts of timid souls who might fear that they were not validly baptized. Should it happen that one supposedly baptized had never received the Sacrament of Baptism he could still be saved. For a good Christian life certainly contains many acts of perfect love.

Pope Innocent III, in a decree, declares that a certain priest who had never been baptized, "because he persevered in the Faith of holy Mother Church and in the confession of Christ's name, was freed from original sin and obtained the joy of heaven."[4]

Indeed the effect of Baptism can be obtained through an act of perfect love. However, this is true only when it is impossible to receive the Sacrament of Baptism. A person may receive sanctifying grace before Baptism through an act of perfect love. Yet he is not excused from receiving the Sacrament when it becomes possi-

[4] Denzinger, n. 343.

ble. Should he then neglect to be baptized, he would lose the grace he had gained.

The unbaptized can also be saved through martyrdom. This is called Baptism of Blood. A martyr is one who willingly suffers death for the Faith of Christ. He must suffer with Christian fortitude. Christ said: "He that shall lose his life for me shall find it."[5]

Martyrdom suffices for salvation only when it is impossible to receive the Sacrament of Baptism. To be saved without Baptism, the martyr must have supernatural Faith. He must also be sorry for his sins. However, his readiness to die for Christ seems necessarily to embrace sorrow for his sins.

St. Thomas says: "Martyrdom purges away all sin, both venial and mortal, unless there be an actual wish to cling to the sin."[6] "Baptism has

[5] St. Matthew x, 39.

[6] Summa Theologica 3 q., 87 a 1 ad 2.

its efficacy in this," says the same angelic Doctor, "that through it man is made like unto Christ crucified."[7] Yet man is much more perfectly made like unto Christ crucified through martyrdom than through Baptism. Hence, it is but proper that martyrdom should not be less efficacious than Baptism."[8]

Martyrdom also supplies the effect of Baptism in children. In them, however, it is not an act of Christian virtue, but only a sign of conformity with Christ crucified.

Through all the teachings of Faith we see the love of God. The conditions of salvation are all based upon the principle of divine love. God will not allow one of his creatures to perish if He can move him by love to do His holy will. He has put the means of salvation within the reach of all. Even the untutored savage can look up to

[7] Epistle to the Romans vi, 3.
[8] Summa Theologica 3 q. 66 a 12.

Heaven and breathe forth an act of love for his Creator that will bring him salvation.

Children that die without Baptism will never possess the Beatific Vision. They will never enjoy the fullness of eternal beatitude. Yet they will not suffer the torments of hell.

The Church has not defined the condition in which unbaptized infants will be in the next life. However, we know that God will decide their fate according to His infinite justice and mercy.

CHAPTER X.

Matter and Form of Baptism.

THE washing with natural water is the matter of Baptism. This washing takes place, in the present discipline of the Church, by pouring the water on the head of the person that is being baptized. This washing signifies the internal cleansing which the Sacrament effects in the soul.

This washing can also take place by immersion or by sprinkling. Thus if the proper form be used a person may be validly baptized by being dipped in the water or by having the water sprinkled upon him. In every case sufficient water must be used so that it will flow upon the flesh of the person baptized. For this reason Baptism by sprinkling is generally considered

doubtful. There is danger that the small amount of water used may simply wet the hair and not flow upon the skin.

The Church prescribes infusion or pouring, doubtless, for practical reasons. Baptism by immersion was certainly practised in the early days of the Church. St. Philip undoubtedly immersed the eunuch.[1] Christ Himself must have been baptized by immersion. "And Jesus being baptized, forthwith came out of the water."[2]

In early times it was often the custom to baptize in rivers and in the sea. Immersion more aptly signifies the burial and resurrection of Christ than any other manner of baptizing. "For we are buried together with him by baptism into death; that as Christ is risen from the dead . . . so we also may walk in newness of life."[3]

[1] Acts of the Apostles viii, 38.
[2] St. Matthew iii, 16.
[3] Epistle to the Romans vi, 4.

In the fourth century baptisteries were built near the churches. They were called baptismal fountains, sacred fountains, or sacred pools. They were so built that persons could go down into the water. Then the priest baptized them either by submerging the head in the water or by pouring the water upon the head.

Absolutely speaking baptism by immersion is not forbidden today. The Roman Ritual says: "Though Baptism may be conferred by pouring the water, or by immersion, or by sprinkling, the first and the second method that are more in use should be followed."

Baptism by pouring the water has been in use since apostolic times. The Apostles must have baptized three thousand in one day.[4] St. Paul baptized the keeper and his family in

[4] Acts of the Apostles ii, 41.

prison. This could scarcely have been by immersion.

The early Fathers all agree that Baptism can be conferred by all three methods. No one has declared that immersion is necessary. If immersion were necessary it would be often very difficult to receive Baptism. There might be a scarcity of water. The sick could not be immersed without great danger. In very cold regions it would work a great hardship.

The water is poured three times in baptizing. This threefold pouring of the water is prescribed by the Church. However, Baptism is validly conferred even if the water be poured but once. St. Jerome says: "Many things, that have come into use by tradition in the Church, have the force of written law, such as the threefold dipping of the head in Baptism."[5]

The water used by the priest in Bap-

[5] Contra Lucif., n. 8.

tism is solemnly blessed on Holy Saturday and on the Saturday before Pentecost. It is kept in the baptismal font in the church. In the beautiful ceremony of blessing baptismal water the priest divides the water with his hand thrusting it toward the four points of the compass. This signifies that Baptism is intended for the whole human race. Then he breathes on the water three times in the form of a cross. This signifies the power of the Holy Ghost that works in the Sacrament of Baptism. Then he pours in the sacred oils and prays that the font may be sanctified and be fruitful to many unto eternal life. In case of necessity unblessed water may be used in Baptism.

The form of Baptism is composed of the words: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." These words are all essential. They may be said

in any language. However, the priest says them in Latin. For this is the liturgical language of the Church. No other form can be validly used for Baptism.

Baptism would be null and void if it were conferred with the words: "I baptize thee in the name of Jesus," or "I baptize thee in the name of the Holy Trinity." Likewise no one could be baptized with the words: "May Christ baptize thee." Christ Himself commanded the Apostles to baptize "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."[6] The Holy Scripture does indeed say that we all "are baptized in Christ Jesus."[7] It is also said: "be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ."[8]

However, the Sacred Scriptures do

[6] St. Matthew xxviii, 19.
[7] Epistle to the Romans vi, 3.
[8] Acts of the Apostles ii, 38.

not tell us to baptize with these words for the form of the Sacrament. All are baptized in the authority of Christ. This is the meaning of the texts. St. Augustine says: "Without naming the Father and the Holy Ghost, Holy Writ commands them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. However, they are understood not to be baptized unless in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."[9]

To confer the Sacrament of Baptism validly the words must be pronounced at the same time as the water is being poured. The water is poured in the form of a cross three times upon the head of the person that is being baptized. The water is poured upon the head because the head is the principal part of the body. If for any reason the water can not be poured upon the head the Baptism is con-

[9] Contra Maxim. i, 2, c. 17, n. 1.

sidered doubtful. Conditional Baptism is given thereafter if possible.

Ordinarily solemn Baptism may not be conferred elsewhere than in the church. When private Baptism has been conferred elsewhere the ceremonies are afterwards supplied in the church. However, the Sacrament of Baptism is the same whether conferred solemnly or privately. The ceremonies are composed of many blessings, exorcisms and applied sacramentals.

In the ceremonies the person to be baptized makes a profession of Faith. This he does himself or through his sponsors. The priest then breathes upon him and commands the unclean spirit to leave him and give place to the Holy Ghost. Then he signs his forehead and his breast with the sign of the cross, praying that he may know and love the Faith. The priest places his hand on the person's head and prays God may look down merci-

fully upon him whom He has called to the true Faith. He begs God to enlighten his mind, to free him from the snares of the devil and to open for him the gates of Heaven.

After blessing the salt he places a few grains upon the candidate's tongue and prays that he may receive the "salt of wisdom" unto eternal life. Next he exorcises the unclean spirit, forbidding him to lay claim to one who is to pass from under the domains of Satan and become a child of God. Again he signs his forehead with the sign of the cross.

Next the priest solemnly leads the one to be baptized into the church. He puts the end of the stole upon him and says: "Enter into the temple of God that thou mayest have part with Christ unto everlasting life." Then the Apostles' Creed and the Our Father are said. Again there is another exorcism, in which the priest declares that

the candidate is to become the temple of God.

The priest, wetting his fingers with saliva, touches the ears and the nostrils of the candidate. This signifies that his ears are to be open to the teachings of Faith and that he is to perceive the sweet odor of serving God. This is done in memory of Christ's touching the deaf and dumb man's ears with saliva.

The candidate then renounces Satan and all his works and pomps. He is next anointed on the breast and between the shoulders with sacred oil. This is called the oil of Catechumens. This anointing signifies that he is to be strong in love and suffering. He now professes faith in God the Father, in Jesus Christ, in the Holy Ghost, in the Catholic Church, in the forgiveness of sins, in the resurrection of the dead and in life everlasting. He is then baptized.

The sponsors place their hands upon him whilst he is being baptized. If there is a doubt whether or not he has been previously baptized, he is given conditional Baptism. The priest says: "If thou art not baptized, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Afterwards he is anointed on the top of the head with holy chrism. This is a sign that he has been consecrated to God. The white robe is then placed upon him. This is a sign of the purity that fills his soul. Finally a lighted candle is placed in his hands. The priest says: "Receive this burning lamp, and guard thy Baptism well; keep the precepts of God, that when the Lord shall come to the marriage feast, thou mayest be able to run to meet Him in the company of all the saints that dwell in Heaven, and mayest have eternal life, and live forever."

CHAPTER XI.

The Subject of Baptism.

CHRIST commanded all men to be baptized. This divine mandate binds, first of all, everyone who has reached the full use of reason.

An adult can not be baptized validly against his will. He must be willing, at least in a general way. He need not consent to be baptized at the moment when the Sacrament is being conferred on him. An insane man may be baptized if he were willing before he became demented. So also a person may be baptized when he is unconscious. No intention is required of idiots and such as have never had the use of reason. They are to be classed with children.

It is not necessary to obtain the

consent of any superiors. A child who has the use of reason may be baptized even against the will of its parents. The right to receive the Sacraments comes to each individual from God Himself. It is not certain that an adult should explicitly request Baptism in order to be baptized validly. However, in practice, no grown person should be baptized unless he has clearly stated a desire to receive the Sacrament.

When there is a doubt as to whether or not a dying person wishes to receive Baptism, he may be baptized conditionally. Should he recover and express a wish to receive the Sacrament, he should be baptized again conditionally.

An adult may receive Baptism validly even though he have neither faith nor hope. To receive the Sacrament licitly, however, he must have both faith and hope and he must be sorry

for the sins he may have committed. He is not obliged to make his confession before Baptism. Yet he may well do so to awaken the proper dispositions. It is a good means of obtaining contrition for his sins. Before Baptism he should, if possible, restore all ill-gotten goods that he may have. He should repair all injury that he may have done to others. He should remove all scandal and all occasions of sin that he may have caused.

An unbaptized adult should receive Baptism as soon as possible. It is a sin to put off Baptism unnecessarily. This practice was once a grave evil in the Church. The Fathers denounced it vigorously. It is sometimes asked whether the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Apostles were obliged to receive Baptism. The Church has never decided the question. However, many great theologians think that they were baptized. Yet the spotless Mother of

Christ could only have been bound for the sake of the character imparted and the increase of divine grace with which she was filled.

Infants must also be baptized. Since they are capable of salvation they are also capable of Baptism. Christ said: "Suffer the little children, and forbid them not to come to me: for the kingdom of heaven is for such."[1] Again He said: "Whoever shall not receive the kingdom of heaven as a child, shall not enter into it."

Baptism has been conferred on infants since apostolic times. There is indeed no direct mention of the fact in the New Testament. Yet it is reasonably inferred that little children must have been baptized when the Apostles baptized a whole family. Thus St. Paul is said to have baptized the jailer and "his whole house."[3]

[1] St. Matthew xix, 14. [2] St. Luke xviii, 17.
[3] Acts of the Apostles xvi, 33.

St. Augustine says: "From the child just born to the decrepit old man, as none is to be denied baptism, so none is there who does not die to sin in baptism: but infants to original sin only, and older persons die also to all those sins whatsoever which by living ill they have added to that which they derived from their birth."[4]

No intention or desire on the part of the child is required to make Baptism valid and licit. Baptism is a spiritual birth. As they are not consulted as to whether or not they are to be born according to the flesh, neither is it necessary to have their consent to be born according to the spirit.

Parents are responsible for both the corporal and the spiritual life of their children. They must provide sustenance for the body before the child can even ask for it. So also they must provide

[4] Tom. vi, Enchir. c. 42.

for the soul before the child itself is able to do so.

Children are to be baptized as soon as possible after birth. It is a laudable custom to have children baptized within a week after they are born. The Roman Ritual says: "New-born infants should be brought to the church as soon as possible, lest this Sacrament, so necessary, be too long deferred so as to endanger their salvation."

There is a beautiful custom in the Church by which children renew their baptismal vows at the time of First Communion. The children themselves thus renew the promises which their sponsors made for them at the time of their Baptism.

This practice, however, has no bearing upon the Baptism of infants. The Baptism is always valid and licit even though the child should reject the promises made for him by his sponsors.

CHAPTER XII.

The Administration of Baptism.

THE priest is the ordinary minister of Baptism. The administration of Baptism is a part of the priest's work. He alone can confer the Sacrament of Baptism in its solemn form. No one else than a priest is allowed to apply the ceremonies that go with the Sacrament of Baptism. Yet the bishop can grant permission to a deacon to administer solemn Baptism. Of course, a bishop can for a greater reason administer this Sacrament in all its solemnity.

It is, however, not permitted to select a priest at will. Each must be baptized by his own pastor. Another priest may not baptize in a parish without the local pastor's permission, except in case of necessity. But the

bishop may baptize any subject of every parish in his diocese.

The Church requires that there should be at least one sponsor in Baptism. However, there are generally two. In no case are two men or two women admitted as sponsors for the same person. Nor is it ever permitted to have more than two. The sponsors profess Faith in the name of the child. In the same manner they promise to renounce the devil and all his works and pomps. When an adult is baptized he answers in his own name.

Sponsors incur a grave obligation to provide for the spiritual welfare of the child should the parents fail to do so. Hence they must be practical Catholics. Children who have not been confirmed should not be chosen as sponsors. They should be at least twelve or fourteen years of age before they assume the duties of sponsors. Members of religious orders and Sisters

should not be chosen as sponsors. Their vows do not allow them the opportunity to fulfil the obligations that would devolve upon them.

Sponsors become spiritually related to the person baptized and to his parents. This spiritual relationship forms an impediment to marriage. Marriage between a sponsor and his godchild or with one of the child's parents would be invalid unless a dispensation had been granted. Both sponsors should touch the child whilst the priest baptizes it. One generally holds the child whilst the other places his hand upon it. When an adult is being baptized both sponsors place their hand upon him.

The Roman Ritual says: "The legitimate minister of Baptism is the pastor or another priest delegated by him or by his bishop." Yet when a child or an adult is in danger of death anyone may confer private Baptism.

He may confer the Sacrament in any language whatsoever. He may be a cleric or a lay person, even if he be excommunicated. He may be a believer or an unbeliever, a Catholic or a heretic, whether man or woman. It is necessary only that the form and intention of the Church be observed.

A person may baptize validly who does not believe in Baptism. He need only have the general intention of conferring this rite according to the will of Christ or the Church. It suffices if he merely wishes to baptize according to the custom of the Church. Baptism conferred by Protestant ministers is generally considered doubtful. In our day they often attach little importance to the matter and form of this Sacrament.

When several persons are present, a certain order is to be observed in selecting one to baptize in case of necessity. A priest is to be preferred

to a deacon, a deacon to a subdeacon, and a student of theology to a lay person. A man is always to be preferred to a woman. However, in certain cases delicacy might make the woman preferable. Then, also, if the woman should know better how to baptize she may be selected. The father or mother should not baptize a child unless there is no other person to do so. In this extreme case the father should be preferred to the mother.

It is not permitted to baptize infants of unbelievers without the consent of the parents. Yet it is not permitted to baptize children that will not be brought up in the Faith, even though their parents consent to the Baptism.

Two persons can not baptize conjointly, that is, one could not say the words whilst the other poured the water. Such a Baptism would be null and void. However, the Sacrament would be valid if two persons

happened to baptize a person at the same time, so that each would both pronounce the words and pour the water.

Even if a child seems to be dead it should be baptized. Science has not yet decided just when death takes place. Commonly speaking, a person is supposed to be dead when the heart ceases to beat. However, this is not at all certain. It is always well to administer conditional Baptism as long as the body is still warm. In this case the form generally used is "If thou art alive, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." However, it is sufficient to have the intention of making the Baptism conditional.

When it is feared that a child will die before it is entirely born it should be baptized on any part of its body that can be reached with the water. A foot or a hand will suffice. Yet if

it be brought forth alive, it should be baptized conditionally: "If thou art not baptized, I baptize thee, etc."

There is another extreme case in which Baptism should be given if possible. It is when a mother dies with a living child unborn. In this case an incision should be made in the abdomen if a person can be obtained who is sufficiently skilled in surgery. Every effort should be made to baptize the child before it dies. Nay, more, intrauterine Baptism should be conferred in case of extreme necessity. Intrauterine Baptism is always doubtful, and, if possible, the child should later be baptized conditionally.

It is only a doctor or a trained nurse that should give intrauterine Baptism. It is very difficult to obtain a flow of water on the head or flesh of the child. This can be done only by a syringe or other instrument. It is not sufficient

to apply the water to the substances that surround the child.

It is not permitted to procure abortion of a non-viable foetus in order to baptize it.

Monstrosities are sometimes born, that scarcely have a human form. If there is a doubt whether or not it is a human child, it should be baptized conditionally. The words used are: "If thou are human I baptize thee, etc."

It is the duty of everyone to know how to baptize. In administering private baptism, natural water is used. It is best to have the child held face upward. The water is then poured on the child's forehead, so as to run over its head. Whilst pouring the water say the words: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Doctors and nurses, especially, should know how to administer Baptism.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Sacrament of Confirmation.

CONFIRMATION is a Sacrament through which we receive the Holy Ghost to make us strong and perfect Christians and soldiers of Christ. It is the Sacrament through which we are strengthened in faith. It confers the grace of Christian strength and fortitude.

Confirmation is a Sacrament of the New Law. Holy Scripture many times makes reference to this Sacrament. Like the other Sacraments it was instituted by Christ. It has been administered in the Church since Apostolic times. Christ had said: "He that believeth in me, as the Scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

The Evangelist continues: "Now this he said of the Spirit which they should receive, who believed in him: for as yet the Spirit was not given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."[1] Here Christ promises to give the Holy Ghost after His Resurrection. It is clear that He did not mean the indwelling of the Holy Ghost that comes with sanctifying grace. For this grace dwelt in the souls of many before the Resurrection.

To fulfil this promise Christ instituted the Sacrament of Confirmation. Through this holy Sacrament His Church could bestow the gift of the Holy Ghost upon the faithful in a visible manner. This is in keeping with the idea upon which Christ founded the Church. Divine grace was to be brought into the souls of men in a manner suited to human nature. He

[1] St. John vii, 38, 39.

instituted external means which also appeal to the physical man.

The fulfilment of Christ's promise is clearly recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. The Apostles certainly used definite forms to call down the Holy Ghost upon the faithful. This was done after they had been baptized.

"But when they had believed Philip preaching of the kingdom of God, in the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. . . Now when the Apostles who were in Jerusalem, had heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John. Who, when they were come, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost. For he was not yet come upon any of them: but they were only baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. They laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost."[2]

[2] Acts of the Apostles viii, 12-17.

It is evident that the Apostles here conferred the Sacrament of Confirmation upon these people who had been baptized. All the requisites of a Sacrament were present. The external sign was there. It was the prayer and the imposition of hands. The grace was wrought. They received the Holy Ghost. This external sign which produced this grace was to be perpetual in the Church. Christ had promised that all who believe in Him should receive the Holy Ghost in this special manner.

The Fathers testify to the fact that the Sacrament of Confirmation was administered in the early Church. "We consecrate baptismal water and the oil of unction. . . . Where is this found in the Scripture? Is it not found in the sacred tradition? What written text ever taught the anointing with oil?[3]

[3] St. Basil, De Spiritu Sancto, n. 55; Migne P. G. Tom. xxxii, c. 187.

St. Jerome speaking to the Luciferians says: "Dost thou not even know that it is the custom in the Churches to impose hands upon the baptized that so the Holy Ghost may be invoked? Dost thou demand where this is found in the Scripture? In the Acts of the Apostles. And indeed, even if it had no authority in Scripture the agreement of the whole world in this matter would have the force of a precept."[4]

The bishop is the ordinary minister of Confirmation. It is clear from the Acts of the Apostles (chapters vii and xix) that the Apostles alone confirmed. Hence it is that the Church has ever considered the bishops as the ordinary ministers of this Sacrament. The bishop is the leader in the spiritual army of the faithful. To him, then, properly belongs the right to enlist soldiers in the cause of Christ.

[4] Contra Lucif. n. 8. Migne P. L. t. xxiii, c. 172.

The bishop is bound to give his subjects the opportunity to receive this great Sacrament. Confirmation can be administered any day of the year and at any hour of the day. Properly, it should be given in the Church. However, it may be given elsewhere when there is a reasonable excuse for so doing.

The pope can delegate any priest to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation. The priest thus becomes the extraordinary minister of the Sacrament. In the Greek Church the priests confer the Sacrament of Confirmation immediately after Baptism. This administration of Confirmation has always been considered valid by the Church.

The power to confirm has often been granted to priests. These are generally missionary priests in remote places. The Pope, as the supreme leader of the spiritual army, can delegate his power

and authority to inferior leaders, such as are priests.

Confirmation is conferred with solemn ceremonies. Those who are to be confirmed should be well instructed in the teachings of Faith. They must have sponsors for Confirmation. These should be other than the sponsors they had in Baptism.

The sponsors should be of the same sex as the person confirmed. They must be practical Catholics who have been confirmed themselves. The same rule holds for them as for sponsors in Baptism. They also contract spiritual relationship which forms an impediment to marriage.

It is a custom to take a new name in Confirmation. This is because those who are confirmed become soldiers of Christ. As such, it is but proper that they bear a distinct name. The name of a saint should be taken. This saint

then becomes a heavenly patron to him who has adopted his name.

The bishop anoints, with holy chrism, the forehead of each person he confirms. He dips his thumb or finger in the sacred oil and makes the sign of the cross with it on the person's brow. Meanwhile the sponsor holds his right hand on the right shoulder of the person whom the bishop is anointing.

Holy chrism is olive oil with which balsam is mixed. It is solemnly consecrated by the bishop on Holy Thursday each year. It is not permitted to use the holy oils consecrated the previous year after the new oils have been blessed.

This anointing with sacred oil in the form of a cross signifies the strength and fortitude conferred by the Sacrament. The holy oils are preserved with great reverence. A lay person is not permitted to touch them. One of the assisting priests generally wipes

the holy chrism from the forehead of those confirmed. The ancient custom of binding the head with linens is generally omitted. This binding of the head signified that the grace received should be preserved with great care.

Whilst the bishop anoints the forehead with holy chrism, he says: "I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." These words constitute the form of the Sacrament. As soon as he anoints the person, he strikes him lightly on the cheek. This signifies that he must now be prepared to suffer ignominy with Christ. Or it may be to remind him that he is now a soldier of Christ. As the bishop strikes him, he says: "Peace be with thee." This he says because to receive the Holy Ghost is to obtain peace of heart.

After all have been anointed the

bishop extends his hands over them and prays that the Holy Ghost by His indwelling may make them the temple of His glory. At the end the bishop solemnly confers his blessing upon those who have been confirmed. This blessing is, however, but a part of the ceremonial. It is not essential to the Sacrament.

CHAPTER XIV.

Effects of Confirmation.

ALL who have been baptized may receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Even infants may be confirmed immediately after Baptism. The Roman Pontifical says: "Infants that the bishop wishes to confirm should be held on the right arm by the sponsors." St. Thomas writes: "The soul, to which pertain both spiritual birth and the spiritual perfection of age, is immortal.

"Since it can obtain spiritual birth in the time of old age so it can obtain a fullness of age in the time of childhood or youth. For the physical changes of age do not bind the soul. Wherefore, this Sacrament should be received by all."[1]

[1] Summa Theologica 3 q. 72, a. 8.

The Roman Cathechism says: "It is to be noted indeed that the Sacrament of Confirmation can be administered to all. However, it is less advisably conferred upon children who have not yet reached the age of reason. Hence while it may not be proper to wait until the twelfth year, it is without doubt well to put it off until the seventh year."[2]

It is only when they have attained the use of reason that children are capable of taking up the spiritual conflict. For this reason it appears more proper to confirm those only who have reached the age of reason.

Confirmation is not essential as a means of salvation. However, it would be a grave sin to hold the Sacrament in contempt. In certain conditions there may be a grave obligation to receive Confirmation. In these days when the faithful are ex-

[2] Part 2, x. 3, n. 18.

posed to so many dangers from unbelief they are certainly bound to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The Church urges all to seek the grace of this great Sacrament. "The faithful are to be taught that this Sacrament is not so necessary that no one can be saved without it. But though not thus necessary, it should not be slighted. Indeed the greatest care should be taken lest the faithful neglect so fruitful a means of sanctity and through which the divine gifts are so generously bestowed. That which God proposes for the sanctification of all should be sought by all with the greatest zeal and eagerness."[3] The Church will not allow those who have not been confirmed to receive the tonsure.

Confirmation is a Sacrament of the living. To receive this Sacrament worthily we must be in the state of

[3] Roman Catechism, part 2, c. 3, n. 6.

grace. The effect of Confirmation is to increase sanctifying grace in the soul. Indeed the name of the Sacrament signifies this. For no one can be strengthened in grace unless he already possess grace.

Those who receive Confirmation unworthily receive the Sacrament, but do not receive its grace. If they later repent and remove the obstacle by a sincere confession, the grace of Confirmation revives in their soul. The grace given in the Sacrament of Confirmation enables us to practice our Faith with courage and constancy.

Confirmation imprints a character on the soul. He who has been confirmed is stamped as a soldier of Christ. He has taken on a new character that will remain in his soul forever. For this reason the Sacrament of Confirmation can not be received more than once.

In Confirmation the faithful receive

the Holy Ghost with all His gifts. The bishop extends his hands over them and utters this prayer: "Almighty and eternal God, Who didst deign to regenerate these thy servants with water and the Holy Ghost; and Who gavest them the remission of all sins, send down upon them Thy sevenfold Holy Spirit, the Comforter—the Spirit of Wisdom and Intellect, the Spirit of Counsel and Fortitude, the Spirit of Knowledge and Piety. Fill them with the Spirit of Fear for Thee, and sign them with the sign of Christ's cross and be propitious to them unto eternal life."

CHAPTER XV.

The Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

THE Holy Eucharist is the Sacrament of Christ's body and blood contained under the species of bread and wine. It was instituted for the spiritual nourishment of our souls. The Holy Eucharist is a true Sacrament. It is an external sign of inward grace. It effects in our soul the grace which it signifies. Though the Sacrament is composed of different parts it is but one single Sacrament. Bread and wine make one refection.

The material used in preparation for the Sacrament is wheat bread and grape wine. No other kind of bread and no other kind of wine can be

validly used for the Sacrament. Christ chose bread and wine for this Sacrament because they were in common use amongst men and because they aptly signify a spiritual banquet.

Bread made from barley, rye or other grain can not be validly used. The wine should be pressed from ripe grapes. It should be pure and free from any admixtures. If it has been corrupted it is no longer valid material for the Sacrament.

According to the laws of the Church, unleavened bread must be used in the Latin rite and leavened bread must be used in the Greek rite. It is most probable that Christ used unleaven bread when He instituted the Holy Eucharist. For it took place on the "first day of the Azymes."[1] Azymes meant unleaven bread.

A few drops of water are mixed with the wine that is to be used for the

[1] St. Matthew xxvi, 17.

Eucharistic Sacrifice. This water is not necessary for the validity of the Sacrament. It is required by a precept of the Church. This mixture of water with the wine commemorates the water that came out of Christ's side with His sacred blood. The admixture of water also signifies the twofold nature of Christ. The water represents Christ's humanity. The wine represents His Divinity.

The priest must have the material present before him when he offers the Holy Sacrifice. He can not consecrate material that is elsewhere. He must have the intention of consecrating the particular material that he has before him.

Bread and wine constitute the matter of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. This Sacrament differs from the other Sacraments. It contains the Author of grace Himself. It contains the body and blood, the soul and Divinity of

Christ. It contains the living and glorified Christ.

The form of the Sacrament consists of the words: "This is my body. This is my blood." These words are uttered by the priest acting in the name and person of Christ.

The Holy Eucharist is a Sacrament so long as Christ is present. It is a Sacrament. The Council of Trent says: "If anyone says that the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ are not present after the consecration in the admirable Sacrament of the Eucharist, but are present only in the use, whilst it is being received, and not before and after; and that the true body of the Lord remaineth not in the hosts or consecrated particles which are reserved or left over after Communion, let him be anathema."[2]

[2] Sess. xiii, can. 4.

CHAPTER XVI.

Christ Promises the Holy Eucharist.

ABOUT a year before His death Christ promised to institute the Holy Eucharist. Surrounded by a great multitude of His disciples He told them that He intended to give them His flesh to eat and His blood to drink. It was a solemn occasion. On the previous day Jesus had wrought two great miracles.

These were intended to prepare their minds for the mystery He was about to propose. He multiplied the loaves and fishes to make them realize His omnipotence. He had walked on the water to show them that He was not subject to the laws of nature. Jesus upbraided them for not believing in

Him: "Amen, amen, I say to you, you seek me, not because you have seen miracles, but because you did eat of the loaves, and are filled."[1]

When they asked what they should do, "Jesus answered and said to them: This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he hath sent."[2]

They then asked of Him a sign such as Moses had given. "Our fathers did eat manna in the desert," they said, "as it is written: He gave them bread from Heaven."[3] "Jesus answered: "Moses gave you not bread from Heaven, but my Father giveth you the true bread from Heaven."[4]

He would say the bread which Moses gave you is as nothing compared with the bread which my Father will give you. Then they cried out: "Lord, give us always this bread. And Jesus

[1] St. John vi, 26.
[2] St. John vi, 29.
[3] St. John vi, 31.
[4] St. John vi, 32.

said to them: "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall not hunger; and he that believeth in Me shall never thirst."[5]

Jesus was preparing their minds for the solemn declaration He was about to make. If they but believe that He came down from Heaven, if they accept His words, they shall receive the bread of life. But they would not believe. The Jews therefore murmured at Him because He said: "I am the living bread which came down from Heaven."[6] They considered Him a mere man. But Jesus answered: "Amen, amen, I say unto you: He that believeth in Me, hath life everlasting. I am the bread of life."[7]

He would not give them mere material food; He would feed them unto eternal life. "Your fathers did eat

[5] St. John vi, 35.
[6] St. John vi, 41.
[7] St. John vi, 47, 48.

manna in the desert, and are dead." He continues, "This is the bread which cometh down from Heaven; that if any man eat of it he may not die. I am the living bread which came down from Heaven. If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world."[8]

Christ meant more than that they should believe in Him. They should have believed in Him long since. But this is something which He is going to give in the future: "the bread that I will give is my flesh."[9] If it had meant only faith in Him, He had already given it. But He meant more. His hearers understood His words literally. For "the Jews therefore strove among themselves saying: How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"[10]

[8] St. John vi, 49-52.
[9] St. John vi, 52.
[10] St. John vi, 53.

They began to argue that such a thing was impossible. Jesus saw their difficulty. They refused to believe in His divine power. Hence, they could only think of a man giving them his dead flesh to eat. Then Jesus declared more emphatically still: "Amen, amen, I say unto you: Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you."[11]

His flesh and blood were to be the food of eternal life, and not food for the body. To impress this upon them He said: "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life: and I will raise him up on the last day."[12] And lest they might think that He meant some figurative food, He added: "For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed."[13]

[11] St. John vi, 54.
[12] St. John vi, 55.
[13] St. John vi, 56.

Then to signify that He intended to establish a Sacrament that would bring Him into closest union with His followers, He continued: "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him."[14] He wished them further to understand that it was to be a life-giving food filled with the power of God. For He said: "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me."[15]

Above all, Jesus wanted them to understand that it was to be a divine food to prepare them for eternal life: "This is the bread that came down from Heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead. He that eateth this bread shall live forever."[16]

Six times Christ asserted that He

[14] St. John vi, 57.
[15] St. John vi, 58.
[16] St. John vi, 59.

would give them His own flesh and blood as the food which would prepare them for eternal life. Yet their question was still unanswered. They wished to know how He could give them His flesh to eat. They did not trust in Him. They demanded an explanation of the manner in which He would use His divine power.

Yet they did not mistake His meaning. They knew that He meant what He said. They did not for one minute think that He was speaking figuratively. "Many therefore of his disciples," says the Evangelist, "hearing it, said: This saying is hard, and who can hear it?"[17]

Jesus knew that they did not want to believe. He reminded them that He would later ascend into Heaven. He told them that they should not judge things by their material nature alone, but that they must have faith

[17] St. John vi, 61.

to understand His words aright: "It is the spirit that quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life."[18]

He was actually pleading with them, asking them to accept His words. Yet they would not. Their hearts were set on material benefits. They were concerned more for their stomach than for their soul. "After this many of his disciples went back; and walked no more with him."[19]

They deserted Jesus because they could not accept His divine teaching. They were rationalists. They were unwilling to believe what was beyond the natural sphere of their own reason. They were materialists. They followed Jesus so long as He filled them with bread and fish. They wanted material bread. They sought good

[18] St. John vi, 64.
[19] St. John vi, 67.

things for this life. They bothered not about spiritual things and life everlasting.

Jesus clearly promises to establish the Holy Eucharist. It is strange that anyone could contest the testimony given. Yet many of our separated brethren have followed the incredulous Jews in this instance. Though they have not deserted Jesus, they refuse to accept His teaching on the Holy Eucharist.

Had Christ not intended to convey the literal meaning of His words, He would have certainly told the Jews that they were mistaken in so accepting them. He would have called them back when they were leaving Him. He would have said: "You are mistaken in my meaning. I do not intend that you should really eat my flesh and drink my blood. I merely mean this is in a figurative sense." But He let them go away.

Then He turned to His Apostles and said: "Will you also go away? And Simon Peter answered Him: Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and have known, that thou art the Christ, the Son of God."[20] This was a true profession of Faith. We do not ask how He can give us His flesh to eat. His word is sufficient for us. We accept it; we believe whatever He tells us. If we can not believe Christ, the Son of God, whom shall we believe? He alone can teach us the way to eternal life.

[20] St. John vi, 68-70.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Institution of the Holy Eucharist.

CHRIST had promised to give His Own body and blood as the spiritual food of those who believe in Him. He had intimated that He would institute a Sacrament of His body and blood. It was to be the Eucharist, the good gift of an all-loving God to His people. It was to be the foundation of the New Testament. It was to be far greater than any of the gifts which the old dispensation had brought. "Christ, being come an high priest of the good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands . . . entered once into the holies."[1]

The Old Testament had many insti-

[1] Epistle to the Hebrews ix, 11.

tutions for the sanctification of its people. Yet all its ceremonies and prescriptions were but figures and types of "the good things to come" in the New Testament. "Now all these things happened to them in figure."[2]

Melchisedech was a priest of the most High who offered sacrifices of bread and wine.[3] The Psalmist says of Christ: "Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech."[4] The sacrifice of Melchisedech was a type of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. Then there were the loaves of the proposition preserved in the tabernacle.[5] These were a type of the Blessed Sacrament preserved under the form of bread upon our altars.

The Paschal Lamb slain each year[6] was a figure of Christ, the Lamb of

[2] I Epistle to the Corinthians x, 11.
[3] Genesis xiv, 18.
[4] Psalm cix, 4.
[5] Exodus xxv, 30.
[6] Exodus xii.

God Who is offered as a daily victim upon our altars. The blood of the covenant[7] prefigured the blood of Christ offered in the Mass. "For," says Christ, "this is my blood of the new testament which shall be shed for many unto the remission of sins."[8]

The sacrifices of the Old Law were inferior to that of Christ. They were mere types and shadows of this one great sacrifice of the New Law. The old sacrifices were, as St. Paul says, "a parable of the time present . . . and almost all things, according to the law, are cleansed with blood: and without shedding of blood there is no remission. It is necessary therefore that the patterns of heavenly things should be cleansed with these: but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these."[9]

[7] Exodus xxiv, 8.
[8] St. Matthew xxvi, 28.
[9] Epistle to the Hebrews ix, 9-23.

Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper the night before He died. St. Matthew relates the event thus: "Whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread, and blessed and broke: and gave to his disciples and said: Take ye, and eat. This is my body. And taking the chalice, he gave thanks, and gave to them, saying: Drink ye all of this. For this is my blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for many unto the remission of sins."[10]

St. Mark describes the same scene: "And whilst they were eating, Jesus took bread; and blessing, broke, and gave to them, and said: Take ye. This is my body. And having taken the chalice, giving thanks, he gave it to them. And they all drank of it. And he said to them: This is my blood of the new testament which shall be shed for many."[11]

[10] St. Matthew xxvi, 26-28. [11] St. Mark xiv, 22-24.

St. Luke also relates the details of the event: "And taking bread, he gave thanks, and brake: and gave to them, saying: This is my body, which is given for you. Do this for a commemoration of me. In like manner the chalice also, after he had supped, saying: This is the chalice, the new testament in my blood, which shall be shed for you."[12]

St. Paul also adds his testimony: "The Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks, broke, and said: Take ye, and eat: this is my body, which shall be delivered for you: this do for the commemoration of me. In like manner also the chalice, after he had supped, saying: This chalice is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as often as you shall drink, for the commemoration of me."[13]

[13] I Epistle to the Corinthians xi, 23-25.
[12] St. Luke xxii, 19-20.

Thus four times the sacred writers set down this great event in all its details. It is indeed a matter of grave import. Christ is here giving Himself into the hands of His disciples. He is preparing a Sacrament through which He can dwell, really and truly, in the midst of His people. It is a Sacrament through which He can be corporally united with everyone who believes in Him. Little wonder then that it should hold such a prominent place in Holy Scripture.

The Apostles indeed understood the meaning of Christ's words. For St. Paul adds: "Therefore whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord . . . For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord."[14]

[14] I Epistle to the Corinthians xi, 27-29.

The Apostle here dwells upon the great reverence that should be shown the Holy Eucharist. In another passage he explains the reason: "The chalice of benediction, which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord?"[15]

For nineteen centuries the Church has accepted the words of Christ in their natural meaning. Christ took the bread and wine and said: "This is my body—This is my blood." The Council of Trent says: "All that have been members of Christ's true Church, and who have treated of this Sacrament, have most plainly professed that at the Last Supper our Redeemer instituted this admirable Sacrament, when after blessing the bread and wine He declared in the clearest terms that

[15] I Epistle to the Corinthians x, 16.

He gave them His Own body and His Own blood.

His words, which are quoted by the Holy Evangelists and afterwards repeated by the Blessed Paul, bear their proper and most obvious meaning. It is thus they were understood by the Fathers. It is indeed a most blameworthy crime that certain wicked and contentious men, contrary to the universal opinion of the Church, distort these words into fictitious and imaginary figures of speech and thus deny the truth of Christ's flesh and blood. The Church, as the pillar and ground of truth, acknowledging with a sense of gratitude this most sublime favor of Christ, detests as diabolical the notions which these wicked men have devised."[16]

When Christ said: "This is my body, This is my blood," He either meant just what He said or He meant

[14] Sess. xiii, c. 1.

something else. He did not say this bread is my body. He said, "This is my body." That which He had in His hand had indeed all the appearances of bread. Moreover it was bread when He took it up. For the Gospel says: "He took bread."

It was bread because this same God who now takes it up had so willed it. He had given it the properties of nourishing the body. He had made grow the wheat from which it was made. He now decrees that, in the present instance, the substance of this particular morsel shall be changed. At the slightest wish of His divine will the universe had come into existence. He Who by the slightest act could create a million worlds and a million races of men now decides to change the substance of the bread which He holds in His hands.

He had come down to earth and taken upon Himself our humanity.

He entered with the fullness of His Godhead into the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He took upon Himself the form of a helpless infant in a forlorn stable that He might look with love into the eyes of an earthly mother and call all men brothers. Now He decides to take a new form. In this form He can dwell as a God-man, not only in Nazareth, but in every city and hamlet of the globe. In this form He can repose, not only in Bethlehem's crib, but on every altar of earth. In this form He can nestle, not only on Mary's bosom, but in the breast of every Christian in every age and clime.

This new form contains all that was borne in Mary's womb. It contains all that lay in the manger. It contains all that hung on Calvary's cross. All this Christ now gives to humanity under the still more humble form of bread and wine.

His Godhead did not change the

appearances of the humanity which He assumed. Christ, the God-man, was to all outward appearances but a mere man. Neither did His united Godhead and humanity change the appearance of the bread and wine. When the soldiers drove those nails into His sacred hands, they lacerated that which to them seemed but ordinary human flesh and muscle. Yet they really pierced the hands of a God-man.

An infinite God really and truly took upon Himself the material form of man. In this He lost nothing of His Godhead. At the Last Supper, that same God-man merely takes upon Himself another form. In this He loses nothing of His divinity nor of His humanity. It all staggers the human mind. It is beyond our full comprehension how He could take either form. Yet it is the work of Omnipotence.

Divinity must perform deeds that are marvelous to our little intellects. It would be unworthy of Divinity to confine itself to the narrow sphere of human operations. By no human power could bread and wine be changed to flesh and blood. Nor could any human agency change the acorn to an oak. Yet it was God Who took bread and wine and said: "This is my body, This is my blood."

It would have been unworthy of our Divine Saviour to have given less than Himself on this solemn occasion. He had created man so that He could love him. He had become man so that He could unite humanity with Divinity. It would have been a poor climax to all this infinite love had He left as a testament a mere meaningless symbol of common food for the stomach. Imagine a loving father who possesses millions calling his loved ones to his death-bed. He gives them

a morsel of bread and a cup or wine. No, he gives them all that he has because he loves them with all his heart.

But Christ is more than a father to us. He is our brother, our Saviour, our God and our Creator. He knows that each one of us would love to kneel beneath Calvary's cross. He knows that we would fain go with the shepherds and bow beside His lowly crib. He knows that our hearts would overflow with joy were we privileged, like holy Simeon, to take Him for one instant into our arms. He knows that we desire to possess Him in all His reality.

The universe itself is a great material symbol of God. Bread and wine would have been but a parody in face of this great symbol that is ever before us. Christ indeed referred to Himself often in figures of speech. Yet there was always a meaning in His com-

parisons. His symbols were always apt. He says: "I am the Good Shepherd."[17] He clearly means that He has tender care for us as a good shepherd has for his sheep. "Jesus saith to Him: I am the way, and the Truth, and the Life," and He explains, "No man cometh to the Father but by me."[18]

When He says: "I am the true vine," He immediately explains His meaning. "I am the vine: you the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit."[19] He says: "I am the Light of the world."[20] Again He explains: "I am come a Light into the world, that whosoever believeth in Me may not remain in darkness."[21] Again Jesus said: "I am the door," then He

[17] St. John x, 11.
[18] St. John xiv, 6.
[19] St. John xv, 1-5.
[20] St. John viii, 12.
[21] St. John xii, 46.

makes His meaning clear, "By me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved."[22]

When Christ says: "I am the Bread of Life,"[23] He does not leave them in doubt. He will not allow them to misunderstand Him. He does not say: "I am like bread that will nourish you by faith." He does not make a mere awkward comparison. He says: "I am the bread of life. I am the living bread which cometh down from heaven."[24]

He had not said: "I am the living door that came down from heaven." Nor would He have them think that He was like the manna that Moses had given them. He declared emphatically: "My flesh is meat indeed: and my blood is drink indeed."[25]

"Except," He says, "you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his

[22] St. John x, 9.
[23] St. John vi, 35.
[24] St. John vi, 35, 41.
[25] St. John vi, 56.

blood, you shall not have life in you."[26] The unbelieving Jews shook their heads. They asked how He could give them His flesh to eat and His blood to drink. Then they left Him. The Apostles accepted His words as the words of God. They were willing to wait. They knew He would show them in due time the manner in which He would give them His flesh to eat and His blood to drink.

The time came. Christ rewarded the faith of these faithful ones at the Last Supper: "Taking the bread, He broke and blessed and said, Take ye and eat: This is my body." It was then they understood how He can give them His flesh to eat. Then taking the cup of wine, He blessed and gave to them saying: "Drink ye all of this; For this is my blood." Now they understand how He can give them His blood to drink.

[26] St. John vi, 54.

Then He adds: "Do ye this in commemoration of me." Do ye this which I have done. Take bread and wine. Say these words over them. They are my words. They will change bread and wine into My body and blood which is to be given for food to My people.

To commemorate Christ in this manner does not mean that Christ is absent. Ordinarily commemoration is made of the absent only. Christ is indeed not visibly present in the Holy Eucharist. Hence He is absent to our material vision. Thus the Holy Eucharist is also a memorial of Christ's passion and His love for us.

On the morrow Christ was to die upon the cross. Death takes our loved ones from us. But Christ forestalled the natural separation of death. By a stupendous miracle of divine love the sacrifice that death should

manifest to the world brought a living victim into each of our hearts.

He was not content with having His Sacred Body hang upon the cross. Nor was He content with having His Sacred Blood flow down the gulleys of Calvary. He sacrificed His body so that it might live in our breast. He shed His blood so that it might warm our heart and inflame us with love for Him. He gave us the Holy Eucharist, the Sacrament of Love.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Transubstantiation.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION means the changing of one substance into another without changing external appearances. Substance is the underlying nature of a thing. It is the thing itself as distinguished from its qualities. In the created universe there are two ultimate realities. These are substance and accidents. The accidents of a thing are known as its external qualities. The form, the color, the taste, the weight, the softness, the hardness and the like, are the accidents of things.

When the substance of one thing is changed into the substance of another we have a substantial change. Thus when Christ changed water into wine

a substantial change took place. However, the qualities of water were also changed into the qualities of wine. A change of the accidents means merely an accidental change. Thus if a block of stone is transformed into a statue we have an accidental change.

In the natural order, a change of all or part of the accidents generally follows a change of substance. Thus, when wine, by a process of fermentation, is changed to vinegar, the taste is changed. However, the form and color may remain unchanged.

When Christ changed bread and wine into His body and blood the external appearance remained unchanged. The substance of bread and wine was changed into the substance of His body and blood. The form, the color, the taste of bread and wine were there. Yet the substance of the bread and wine was not. Hence, after Christ uttered those divine words: "This is

my body, This is my blood," that which He held in His hands was no longer bread and wine.

Transubstantiation does not belong to the natural order. Substance is something that we can not investigate by our natural powers. The unaided intellect knows the substance of things through their external properties alone. Hence, if God changes the substance of a thing without changing its external properties, we can not discover the change by any mere human faculty.

God must tell us that the change has taken place, else we could never know it. All we can know of ourselves is that such a change is not opposed to right reason. Transubstantiation, then, is known to us only by divine Revelation.

When Christ said: "This is my body, This is my blood," He became really present under the forms which

He held in His hands. He did not become present in the bread and wine nor with the bread and wine. For that which He held was no longer bread and wine.

Christ did not say that the bread and wine were to become a receptacle for His body and blood or for His spirit. He simply declared: "This is my body, This is my blood." If this clear proposition is not true, then it is meaningless.

It would be easier for the natural reason to understand, if Christ had said: "My body is in this bread, My blood is in this wine." For indeed our bodily senses tell us that they see and taste both bread and wine after the consecration has taken place. So great a gift, it seems, can come to us only at the price of great faith.

The doctrine of transubstantiation does not offend reason. It does not do violence to our natural faculties. Our

reason and our faculties owe their very existence to God. He has given us the capability of knowing certain things through the natural use of our faculties. In the doctrine of Transubstantiation He gives us information that our natural faculties could never attain of themselves.

Our natural faculties see and taste bread and wine. We feel that we have a right to maintain that these things are really bread and wine. If they are not bread and wine, then our senses are deceived. But our senses are not deceived. Their object is to see the properties of things. Our senses tell us that the taste and the color of bread and wine are here. Reason naturally suggests, then, that the substance of bread and wine is also here.

But the author of reason tells us that another substance is here. He does not deceive us by making a secret

change. He makes the change and tells us of it. Suppose I meet a poor, blind man. He has a one-dollar bill in his hand. I ask to see the bill and then give him a one-hundred-dollar bill in its stead. I tell him what I have done. He knows that I will not tell him an untruth. To him the new bill may appear to be the same as the old one. He has no faculty of discovering its worth. Yet he goes his way rejoicing in his treasure.

On this earth we are all blind to the things of the supernatural. When God presents us with a heavenly gift and tells us its infinite value we may well go on our way rejoicing.

By Transubstantiation the entire nature and substance of bread and wine cease to be. However, this substance is not annihilated. It is not reduced to nothing. It is changed into the substance of Christ's body and blood. This is not a mere moral or temporal

change. It is a real and actual change wrought by God's Omnipotence.

This sublime doctrine of Transubstantiation has been held in the Church since the days of the Apostles. The early Fathers all attest to it in eloquent words. St. Ambrose writes: "That bread is bread before the Sacramental words are spoken. But when the consecration takes place the bread becomes the flesh of Christ.

"We will explain this. How can that which is bread be the body of Christ? By the consecration. By what words does the consecration take place? Whose words are they? They are the words of the Lord Jesus. . . . When the priest produces this venerable Sacrament he does not use his own words, but the words of Christ. He uses the words of Him Who made all things.

"The Lord commanded and the heavens were made. The Lord commanded and the earth was made. The Lord

commanded and the seas were made. The Lord commanded and all creatures were generated. You see how powerful is the word of Christ. If, therefore, there is such force in the word of the Lord Jesus that it can produce things that did not exist, how much more capable is it of changing things that already exist?

"The firmanent did not exist, the earth did not exist, the seas did not exist. Yet 'He spoke, and they were made: he commanded, and they were created.'[1] Hence, I answer you; before the consecration it was not the body of Christ. But, I tell you, after the consecration it is the body of Christ. He spoke and it was made: he commanded and it was created. . . . Understand how the word of Christ is wont to change every creature and when it will, it changes the laws of nature.

[1] Psalm cxlviii, 5.

"Let us take an example from His Own birth. Naturally man is generated through the conjugal relation of male and female. But because the Lord, Who instituted this Sacrament, willed it He was born of the Holy Ghost and a Virgin, as Christ, that is, as the man Jesus Christ, the mediator between God and humanity. Do you see then how, contrary to the laws and order, a man is born of a Virgin?

"Take another example: The Israelites were beset by the Egyptians. They were hemmed in by the sea. By a divine command Moses touched the waters with his rod.[2] The waters were divided, not indeed according to the workings of their own nature, but according to the grace of a heavenly mandate.

"Take another example: The people thirsted; they came to the fountain; the water was bitter. The saintly

[2] Exodus xiv.

Moses cast a tree into the fountain and the fountain that was bitter became sweet.[3] It changed the custom of its nature; it received the sweetness of grace.

"Take a fourth example: The head of an axe fell into the water, and since, it was true, it was iron it naturally sank. Eliseus cast a piece of wood into the water and at once the axe rose and floated upon the surface of the water.[4] This is indeed contrary to the nature of iron. For it is a material heavier than water.

"From all these examples do you not understand how the celestial word operates? If it operates in an earthly fountain, if it operates in other things, does it not operate in the heavenly Sacraments? Wherefore you have learned that bread becomes the body of Christ, that wine with water is put

[3] Exodus xv, 23-25.
[4] IV Kings vi, 4-6.

into the chalice, but that it becomes the blood of Christ by the consecration of the heavenly word.

"But, perhaps, you say that you do not see the appearance of blood. But it has a similitude: for so you have received a similitude of death, so that there be not the horror of blood, and yet it effects the price of redemption. You have, therefore, learned that what you receive is the body of Christ."[5]

[5] De Sacramentis, Liber iv. Migne P. L. t. xvi.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Real Presence.

CHRIST is really and truly present in the Holy Eucharist. He is not merely spiritually present. He is present with His body and blood, His soul and Divinity. He is not merely present by Faith. Yet it is by Faith we know that He is really and truly present under the Sacramental species.

As God, Christ dwells in the Holy Eucharist with the fullness of His Divinity in a special manner. It is not merely by His omnipresence that He is here. As man, Christ dwells in the Holy Eucharist with the fullness of His humanity.

Christ's body in the Holy Eucharist is a living, glorified body. As such it does not take the shape and dimensions of the sacred species. Though the

substance of Christ's body is really present under the sacred species it is not subject to the changes that take place in them.

In a certain sense Christ's body exists under the sacramental species as our soul exists in our body. Though Christ's body is present in reality, yet it is there after the manner of a spirit. If the sacred species are broken, Christ's body is not broken. If they are hot or cold Christ's body is not, therefore, hot or cold.

Christ, as man, does not exercise His human senses in the Holy Eucharist after the natural manner. He communes with us in a supernatural manner. When we touch the sacred species we touch Christ's body as we are said to touch a person when we touch his clothing. Christ's body can be elevated, carried from place to place, and consumed under the sacramental species. As man, Christ in the Holy

Eucharist enjoys the Beatific Vision and possesses infused knowledge.

Christ is present in the Holy Eucharist whole and entire under each species, and under each separate part thereof. Each separate particle of the species of bread contains Christ whole and entire. Each separate protion of the species of wine also contains Christ whole and entire. If a particle be broken Christ is present whole and entire under each portion.

It is even so with a material substance. A small block of wood is just as truly wood as a whole forest. A glass of water is just as truly water as an ocean. So Christ is just as truly present under a small portion of the sacred species as He is under all.

First Christ took bread and said: "This is my body," He then took wine and said: "This is my blood," Yet He did not intend to separate His

body from His blood. Nor did He intend that His body should be present under the species of bread alone. Nor did He mean that His blood was present under the species of wine alone. When Christ said: "This is my body," He meant His living body with which was united His blood and His soul and Divinity. When He said: "This is my blood," He meant the blood that coursed through His living body.

The separate species of bread and wine form the external sign of the Sacrament. As such, the species of bread represent the body of Christ and the species of wine represent the blood of Christ.

The species of bread and wine retain their reality in the Holy Eucharist. They are not merely imaginary species. They form the external sign of the Sacrament. When the species are changed or corrupted so as to be no longer the species of bread and wine,

Christ ceases to be present under them. If the sacred species of bread were burned to ashes or left until they had become corrupted by dampness or other causes, Christ would no longer be present.

After Holy Communion, Christ is sacramentally present within us until the sacred species are corrupted by digestive process. It is commonly supposed that the Real Presence is within us about ten minutes after Holy Communion.

The sacred species produce the same natural effects upon our body as would so much bread and wine. When they are changed they take on the new substance that they would take if the substance of bread and wine were present. Christ's body is not changed into the new substance. It simply ceases to exist there when the Sacramental sign is destroyed.

The Holy Eucharist is preserved in

the tabernacle under the species of bread alone. It is kept in a vessel called a ciborium. It is carried to the sick in a small case called a pyx. The Holy Eucharist is commonly called the Blessed Sacrament.

We adore the Holy Eucharist because Christ is present therein. We genuflect when entering or leaving the church, in which the Blessed Sacrament is present. We also genuflect when passing before the altar on which the Blessed Sacrament is kept. To genuflect means to bow the right knee to the floor. If the Blessed Sacrament is exposed we bow on both knees. The Blessed Sacrament is exposed during Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. It is exposed whilst the priest is giving Holy Communion. It is exposed whenever there is solemn adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

Forty Hours' Devotion is a time of solemn adoration lasting about three

days. On Holy Thursday the Blessed Sacrament is exposed all day for solemn adoration. This is the day on which Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist. In many churches the Holy Hour of adoration is observed each week.

The sanctuary lamp is kept burning day and night in all churches in which the Blessed Sacrament is kept. This is a light made from olive oil. It is kept burning out of respect for the Blessed Sacrament. It is also a sign of living faith. The Blessed Sacrament is kept in all churches at which there is a resident priest. It is also kept in many convent chapels where a priest says Mass at least once a week.

It is a pious custom amongst faithful Catholics to visit our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament often. For this reason churches in which the Blessed Sacrament is kept are open all day. Our Divine Saviour instituted the Blessed Sacrament so that He could dwell in

our midst. In the Holy Eucharist Christ has a special care for us. Hence, prayers said before the Blessed Sacrament have a special force and worth.

Elsewhere we adore God in spirit. Here we adore Him in spirit and in reality. We adore Him not only with our intellect and will, but with our whole self. For this reason the great saints of the Church were all faithful adorers of the Blessed Sacrament. It was whilst kneeling before their Eucharistic God that they gained their greatest graces.

Christ dwells on the altar out of love for us. He has come to dwell near to us so that it may be easy for us to come to Him. Day and night He is waiting for us. He is pleading with us saying: "Come to me all you that labor and are burdened and I will refresh you."[1]

[1] St. Matthew xi, 28.

CHAPTER XX.

The Administration of the Holy Eucharist.

THE priest administers the Holy Eucharist. He distributes this august Sacrament to the faithful in Holy Communion. When properly delegated, a deacon may distribute Holy Communion.

All that are baptized may receive the Holy Eucharist. Baptism is a spiritual birth. The other Sacraments are intended for those who have been baptized. Hence the Holy Eucharist could not produce its effect in an unbaptized person. Even infants and insane persons can receive the Holy Eucharist.

Holy Communion was sometimes given to infants in the early Church.

Out of reverence for the Sacrament, however, this practice was abandoned. According to the present practice of the Church, children are admitted to Holy Communion as soon as they have attained the use of reason. This is generally when they are about seven years of age. They need only to be able to know that Christ is present in the Holy Eucharist. They can then have the intention required for receiving the Sacrament fruitfully.

The Holy Eucharist is a Sacrament of the living. Hence, to receive it worthily we must be in a state of grace. To receive the Holy Eucharist knowingly and wilfully in mortal sin is a sacrilege. St. Paul says: "Whosoever shall eat this bread or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord."[1] Those who are conscious of mortal sin should go to con-

[1] I Epistle to the Corinthians xi, 27.

fession before Holy Communion. If they are in doubt as to the state of their soul, they should at least try to make an act of perfect contrition. If possible, it would be advisable to go to confession when in doubt.

Those who go to Holy Communion daily generally go to confession weekly. They go even if they are not conscious of sin. Those who receive the Holy Eucharist in mortal sin receive the Sacrament. But they do not gain the grace it is intended to give. Nor does this grace revive after the sin has been forgiven. It is necessary to go to Holy Communion again to gain this grace.

Not only should our soul be pure, but our body should also be decorous when we receive Holy Communion. The law of the Church prescribes that we must be fasting when we receive the Holy Eucharist. We must abstain from all food and drink from the previous midnight. Even the

smallest amount of anything that might serve as food or drink breaks this fast.

The hour of midnight need not be reckoned from the natural time of the sun. Any time in use may be followed. If there are several timepieces the slowest may be followed. If we are in the act of swallowing something when the clock strikes, our fast is not broken thereby. The dying may receive Holy Viaticum when not fasting. Those who have been sick for at least a month may receive Holy Communion without fasting. They may even thus receive two or three times a week.

The Holy Eucharist is not absolutely necessary for salvation. To be saved it is necessary only to be in the state of grace. However, the Holy Eucharist may be absolutely necessary to enable a person to persevere in grace. All are bound to receive the Holy Eucharist by virtue of a divine

command and the laws of the Church. Christ Himself said: "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you can not have life in you."[2]

The Council of Trent says: "Our Saviour, when He was about to leave this world to go to the Father, instituted this Sacrament, into which He poured the treasures of His divine love for man, making a memorial of His wonders. He also commanded us to receive this Sacrament, thus to honor His memory and to show forth His death until He comes to judge the world. He willed that this Sacrament should be received as the spiritual food of souls, by which the living should be nourished and strengthened in the life of Him Who said: 'He that eateth me, the same shall live by me.'[3] "[4]

[2] St. John vi, 54.
[3] St. John vi, 58.
[4] Denzinger, n. 756.

The Council of Lateran decreed that "all the faithful of both sexes, after they have reached the age of reason, shall receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist reverently at Easter, unless by the advice of their pastor, for a reasonable cause they are led to abstain for a time; otherwise whilst they are alive they shall be excluded from the Church and when they are dead they shall be deprived of Christian burial."[5] Neither infants nor those who have lost the use of reason are bound by these commands. For those who have not the use of reason are not capable of observing precepts.

All who have reached the use of reason are bound under pain of mortal sin to receive Holy Communion during the Eastertime. This obligation begins, of course, after the pastor has admitted them to Holy Communion. Eastertime properly means the two

[5] Denzinger, n. 363.

weeks between Palm Sunday and the Sunday after Easter. However, the Eastertime in most countries extends from the first Sunday of Lent to Trinity Sunday. A sacrilegious Communion does not satisfy the precept of receiving the Holy Eucharist during the Eastertime.

The priest receives Holy Communion under both species when he celebrates Mass. He must do so, else the external sign of the Sacrament would not be complete. If he communicates when he is not saying Mass he receives under one species. The faithful receive the Holy Eucharist under one species. It is the species of bread. Some erring ones have attempted to maintain that it is necessary for all to receive the Holy Eucharist under both species. They cite the words of Christ: "Drink ye all of this."[6] Yet these words were addressed to the

[6] St. Matthew xxvi, 27.

Apostles, who were to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

He also said: "Do this for a commemoration of me." Yet He did not intend that all the faithful should say Mass. Christ indeed said that all must eat His flesh and drink His blood. Yet His flesh and blood in the Holy Eucharist is spiritual food. His flesh and blood are not in material form. They are in a glorified state. We do not eat the flesh of Christ and drink His blood in a material sense when we receive the Holy Eucharist. When we receive any small portion of either sacred species we receive the body and blood of Christ indeed. But we do not receive it as ordinary food. Hence it is clear that it is not necessary to receive Holy Communion under both species.

In the ancient Church the Holy Eucharist was indeed given under both species. It is now so given in the Greek rite. For practical reasons this

custom gradually fell into disuse in the Latin Church. In the early Church it was never considered necessary to receive the Holy Eucharist under both species. At the time when the custom was in practice the faithful often received under one kind. Communion was given to infants in those days under the species of wine alone. The faithful were then permitted at times to take the Holy Eucharist to their homes under the species of bread alone.

The Council of Constans defined this question: "Since in some parts of the world certain ones have rashly dared to assert that the Christian people are bound to receive the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist under both the species of bread and the species of wine . . . against the laudable custom of the Church reasonably approved, which they have tried to condemn as sacrilegious, hence, it is that

this present council declares, discerns and defines . . . that though in the early Church the faithful received this Sacrament under both species, however, this custom is reasonably introduced to avoid any dangers and scandals, that those celebrating Mass receive under both species whilst the faithful receive under the species of bread alone."[7]

He who receives the Holy Eucharist under both species does not, therefore, receive more grace. It is the same Sacrament under both species that it is under one species. Hence, it gives the same grace. He receives most grace in the Holy Eucharist who is best disposed at Holy Communion.

The effects of the Holy Eucharist are many. It increases sanctifying grace in the soul. It strengthens the soul in grace. It is the spiritual food of the living. The soul is united with

[7] Denzinger, n. 585.

Christ in a special manner through the Holy Eucharist. "He that eateth my flesh," says Christ, "and drinketh my blood abideth in me and I in him."[8]

This union between our soul and Christ is most intimate. It is the union of love. It is, as it were, the beginning of eternal life. We are corporally united with Christ in the Holy Eucharist. The body and blood of Christ sanctify our bodies and thus prepare them for a glorious resurrection. It is a pledge of eternal life. For Christ will certainly wish to preserve our bodies in which He has so often dwelt. "He that eateth my flesh," says He, "and drinketh My blood, hath everlasting life: and I will raise him up on the last day."[9]

The Holy Eucharist strengthens us against temptation. It inflames our heart with divine charity. It makes us detest sin. It draws us to God.

[8] St. John vi, 57. [9] St. John vi, 55.

God has shown His tenderest love for man in the Holy Eucharist. In this Holy Sacrament He seems to have centered all the power of His Infinite Love. Not content to be near us, He comes to take up His abode in our breast. This Blessed Sacrament is indeed a proof of God's infinite love for us.

CHAPTER XXI.

The Sacrifice of the Mass.

THE Mass is the one true Sacrifice of the New Law. In the Mass Christ is offered up to God the Father under the appearance of bread and wine. The Mass is one and the same Sacrifice as the Sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Christ is the Victim and the High Priest both in the Mass and on the cross. The Mass is the reproduction of Calvary's Sacrifice in our midst. The fruits of the Mass are the fruits of Christ's Sacrifice on the cross.

The Mass is not a mere representation. It is a true sacrifice. Christ is offered up just as truly in the Mass as He was on the cross. Yet Christ does not die in the Mass. For He can die no more.

A sacrifice is an external act of

religious worship. It is the oblation of something to God to acknowledge His supreme dominion over all created beings. It is only the positive law of God that can make the immolation of anything a sacrifice. It must be offered according to a divinely instituted ceremonial. The ceremonial action must be performed by a divinely appointed person. Thus the two essential parts of a sacrifice are the ceremonial offering by an authorized person and the immolation of the victim.

Animals were sacrificed in the Old Law. To kill a heifer did not constitute a sacrifice. It had to be killed according to a divinely authorized ceremony. Nor was the killing of the heifer according to the ceremonial a sacrifice unless it were offered by the authorized priest.

Christ's death on the crosss was a true sacrifice because of the ceremonial offering that took place at the Last

Supper. Here Christ offered Himself. He is "a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech."[1] This is the sacrifice that was consummated on Calvary. This is the sacrifice that is continued in the Mass.

Before His passion Christ "immolated Himself as a host and a victim, being both the priest and the Lamb of God, He Who taketh away the sins of the world. When did He do this? When He gave His body to His assembled disciples to eat and His blood to drink. He then declared that the sacrifice of the Lamb was perfected. For the body of a victim is not fit to eat if it is alive. Wherefore, when He gave His disciples His body to eat and His blood to drink, He Who performed this Mystery by His will and in an ineffable and invisible manner had immolated His body."[2]

[1] Psalm cix, 4.

[2] St. Gregory of Nyssa, Or I in ch. Resur. Migne P. G. t. xlvi, c. 611.

Without this ceremonial offering at the Last Supper Christ's death on the cross would have been mere murder. The soldiers who nailed Christ to the cross did not offer the Sacrifice. They were not ordained priests. Theirs was an action of crude barbarity. Even in the Old Law the victims were slaughtered by others and then offered by the priests.

The oblation of Christ's body and blood at the Last Supper and Christ's death on the cross form one sacrifice. Hence the Mass is the continuation of Christ's oblation of Himself at the Last Supper and His death on the cross. The oblation of Himself is the same action. Yet His passion and death are shown forth by representation. In the Mass the separate consecration of bread and wine "show forth the death of the Lord."[3]

The species of bread contain Christ

[3] I Epistle to the Corinthians xi, 26.

whole and entire. Yet they represent His body separated from His blood. Then the species of wine contain Christ whole and entire. Yet they represent Christ's blood as shed for us upon the cross. His blood was then separated from His body. This separate consecration under both species is essential. Mass would not be valid if the consecration took place under one species alone.

Christ "offering one sacrifice for sins . . . by one oblation He has perfected forever them that are sanctified."[4] The Mass is the continuation of this one Sacrifice. "The Holy Church herself," says a recent writer, "in the very act of offering the Mass declares it to be 'the spotless evening sacrifice offered up on the cross for the salvation of the world,'[4] the sacrifice 'by the offering of which Thou

[4] Epistle to the Hebrews x, 12-14.
[4] Roman Missal, Feast of the Spear and Nails.

didst set the whole world free from the bonds of sin,'[5] 'the most holy offering of the same sacrifice offered on the cross by Jesus Christ a spotless and willing Victim to God the Father'[6].'"[7]

The Sacrifice of the Mass, then, is essentially the same as the sacrifice of the cross. They differ only in the manner in which they were offered. On the cross Christ really died and was really slain. He really shed His blood. In the Mass Christ is offered up under the species of bread and wine. His death and the shedding of His blood are represented in the distinct consecration of the two species.

Christ instituted the Sacrifice of the Mass at the Last Supper. After He had instituted the Holy Eucharist, He said: "Do ye this for a commemora-

[5] Roman Missal, Prayer for one defunct male.
[6] Roman Missal, Feast of the Spear and Nails.
[7] Ecclesiastical Review, vol. XLIX, No. 4, Oct. 1913.

tion of me."[8] Thus He instituted the Sacrifice of the Mass. In this Holy Sacrifice the Holy Eucharist was to be brought to all the children of men.

The Council of Trent says that Christ "instituted a new Pasch, immolating Himself by the Church through the priests under visible signs in memory of His passing from this world to the Father, when through the shedding of His blood He redeemed us, snatched us from the power of darkness, and transferred us into His kingdom."[9]

In Apostolic days the Mass was called the "Breaking of bread." It was afterwards called the Sacred Liturgy or the Mysteries. It got the Latin name "Missa" probably from the fact that the catechumens were dismissed before the essential part of the sacrifice began. There is still a trace of this in the Liturgy of the

[8] St. Luke xxii, 19.
[9] Denzinger, n. 816.

Mass today. The "Ite Missa est" signifies, "Go, the Mass is ended."

The essence of the Mass consists most probably in the consecration alone. The essence of a sacrifice consists in the offering and immolation of the victim. Christ, however, is not really slain in the Mass. But He is really offered. His death is represented by the twofold consecration.

The consecration of the Mass takes place when the priest says the words of Christ: "This is my body, This is the chalice of my blood, the new and eternal testament which for you and for many is shed unto the remission of sin."[10] The priest utters these words in the name and person of Christ. They produce a supernatural effect. As soon as they are spoken the substance of the bread and wine is changed into the substance of Christ's body and blood.

[10] St. Matthew xxvi, 28.

Hence, in the Mass Christ is not offered in His natural state, such as He existed on earth or as He exists in Heaven. He is offered in a sacramental state. At the offertory of the Mass the bread and wine are offered as the material that is to be changed by divine power into the Victim of the Sacrifice. The species of bread and wine remain as the visible forms of the Sacrifice. We can not see "in the chalice His blood by which we were redeemed and by which we live," says St. Cyprian, "when in the chalice there is no wine, whereby the blood of Christ is shown forth."[11]

St. Paul compares the Mass to the sacrifice of the Old Law. As the blood of the Victim was brought into the holies, so the blood of Christ is brought upon our altars through the Mass. So much greater is the Mass than the old sacrifice that those who still cling

[11] Epistle 62 ad Caecilium, n. 2.

to the old dispensation are not permitted to partake of this new Sacrifice.

"We have an altar," he says, "whereof they have no power to eat who serve the tabernacle. For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the holies by the high-priest for sin are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people by His own blood, suffered without the gate."[12]

The Mass is a real sacrifice. There are many figurative sacrifices mentioned in Holy Scripture. Amongst these are prayers, praise, almsgiving, charity and works of penance. The Psalmist says: "A sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit."[13] "By him therefore," says the Apostle, "let us offer the sacrifice of praise always to God, that is to say, the fruit of lips confessing to his name."[14] Ecclesiasticus

[12] Epistle to the Hebrews xiii, 10-12. [13] Psalm l, 19.
[14] Epistle to the Hebrews xiii, 15.

says: "He that doth mercy, offereth sacrifice."[15] Again the Psalmist: "Let my prayer be directed as incense in thy sight: the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice."[16]

A true sacrifice is an established act of public worship. These are private offerings of the heart to God. They are sacrifices only in a figurative sense. In the same manner we are wont to say that we make sacrifices. We are often said to make sacrifices when we contribute liberally to the support of religion. We sometimes make sacrifices to help our neighbor. We call it a sacrifice to deny ourselves some pleasure or necessity. These are all figurative sacrifices. They are works and deeds offered up. A good Christian life itself is a life of sacrifice in this sense.

St. Gaudentius of Brescia, who lived

[15] Ecclesiasticus xxxv, 4.
[16] Psalm cxl, 2.

in the fourth century, tells us why Christ instituted the Sacrifice of the Mass under the form of bread and wine: "There are two reasons why He appointed the sacraments of His body and blood to be offered under the appearance of bread and wine. First, that the spotless Lamb of God might deliver a clean victim to a cleansed people; to be offered without burning, or blood, or broth, that is without juices from flesh, and a victim which might be easily procured and easily offered by all men.

"In the second place, as bread made out of many grains of wheat, reduced to flour, must needs be made with water, and brought to perfection with fire, therein is reasonably apprehended a figure of Christ's body. Who we know was made into one body kneaded out of the mass of the whole human race, and perfected by the fire of the Holy

Ghost. For He was conceived by the Holy Ghost. . . .

"In like manner the wine of His own blood, gathered together out of many branches, that is grapes of the vine planted by Himself, is pressed out in the winepress of the cross, and by its own virtue ferments in the capacious vessels of those who receive with a faithful heart. You are going forth from the bondage of Egypt and of Pharaoh, the devil, receive with me with all the fervor of a religious heart this sacrifice of the Passover of the Saviour, that our inmost bowels may be sanctified by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, Whom we believe to be present in His Own Sacraments."[17]

[17] Sermo ii, De Exod. Lect. Migne P. L. t. xx, cols. 860-861.

CHAPTER XXII.

The Mass in Prophecy and Type.

THE Prophet Malachias foretold that the Sacrifice of the Mass would be offered up amongst all nations in every part of the globe.

The Jewish priests had offered lame and sickly animals for sacrifices to God. Malachias chided them for this disgraceful proceeding. He told them that the Jewish priesthood would be abolished and a new priesthood established. Thus he upbraided them: "Saith the Lord. To you, O priests . . . you offer polluted bread upon the altar. . . . If you offer the blood of sacrifice, is it not evil? And if you offer the lame and the sick, is it not evil? . . . I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts: and I will not receive a gift from your hand.

For from the rising of the sun unto the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean oblation."[1]

These words clearly refer to the Christian era. It is then only the Lord's "name is great among the Gentiles." The Jewish sacrifices were offered at Jerusalem. It is only in the Church of Christ that sacrifices are "offered in every place." It will be no longer a bloody offering of goats and oxen. It will be a "clean oblation." This can mean only the Immaculate Lamb of God, offered up in the sacrifice of the Mass.

This prophecy could not refer to pagan sacrifices. For as St. Paul says: "The things which the heathens sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God."[2] Hence, it could have meant

[1] Malachias i, 6-11.

[2] I Epistle to the Corinthians x, 20.

neither the Jewish sacrifices nor the heathen sacrifices. It could not have been a new Jewish sacrifice. For none has been established. It referred to a new sacrifice that was to be offered by a new priesthood. For the Lord says of the Jewish priests, in the words of the prophet: "I will not receive a gift from your hands."[3] Thus it could only mean the Christian sacrifice offered by the priesthood of Christ.

The prophecy of Malachias finds its fulfilment only in the Sacrifice of the Mass. This is the only sacrifice that is essentially clean. This is the only universal sacrifice that the world has ever known. This is the only sacrifice that is offered at all times and in every place on which the sun shines.

The Council of Trent teaches that this prophecy refers to the Mass:

[3] Malachias i, 10.

"This is that clean oblation which can not be defiled by the unworthiness or malice of those who offer it; which oblation the Lord, through Malachias, foretold would be offered up clean in every place to His name which would be great among the Gentiles."[4]

St. Jerome commenting on the words of Malachias says: "Not in one province of the world, Judea, not in one city of Judea, Jerusalem, but in every place is an oblation offered, not an unclean one, as by the people of Israel, but clean, as in the ceremonies of the Christians."[5]

The sacrifice of Melchisedech was a type of the Mass. He offered a sacrifice of bread and wine: "Melchisedech, the king of Salem, bringing forth bread and wine, for he was a

[4] Denzinger, n. 516.
[5] Tom. vi, Comm. in Malach., col. 952.

priest of the most high God."[6] St. Paul says: "Christ did not glorify himself that he might be made a high priest; but he that said unto him: Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And he saith in another place: Thou art a priest forever, according to the order of Melchisedech."[7]

The priesthood of Melchisedech was a figure of Christ's priesthood. The Psalm reads: "The Lord said to my Lord: sit thou at my right hand: until I make thy enemies thy footstool. . . . Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech."[8] St. Matthew, St. Luke, St. Mark, and the Acts of the Apostles refer this Psalm to Christ.[9] Hence, the sacrifice offered by Melchisedech was a figure

[6] Genesis xiv, 18.
[7] Epistle to the Hebrews v, 5-6.
[8] Psalm cix, 1-4.
[9] St. Matthew xxii, 44; St. Luke xx, 42; St. Mark xii, 36; Acts of the Apostles ii, 34.

of the sacrifice offered by Christ. This is the sacrifice of His Own body and blood under the appearance of bread and wine. If this were not true, Christ could not be called "a priest according to the order of Melchisedech."

The Prophet Isaias foretold that the Lord would establish a new priesthood amongst the Gentiles: "I am come that I may gather them with all nations and tongues; and they shall come and shall see my glory. . . . And I will take of them to be priests and Levites, saith the Lord."[10] If there be a new priesthood, there must also be a sacrifice. "For," says St. Paul, "every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is necessary that he also have something to offer."[11]

Commenting on the words of the Psalmist, "Sacrifices and oblation thou

[10] Isaias lxvi, 18, 21.

[11] Epistle to the Hebrews viii, 3.

didst not desire," St. Augustine says: "Even the sacrifice which the faithful know was as yet foretold in figures, the ancients celebrated types of that which was to be . . . God did not desire those sacrifices . . . because all those were the words as it were of one who promises. . . . The promissory signs have been set aside because the promised verity has been exhibited. In this body we are; of this body we are partakers; what we receive we know, and may you, who know not, know, and when you have learnt, may you not receive unto judgment. 'For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself.'[12]" [13]

For many centuries God in His Own divine wisdom revealed the Sacrifice of the Mass to man in types and prophecies alone. In all the mysteries

[12] I Epistle to the Corinthians xi, 29.

[13] Tomus iv, In Ps. xxxix, n. 12, 13; col. 474-475.

of revealed religion He is dealing with human nature. Perhaps He wished to prepare man for this august sacrifice by allowing him to yearn for it through all these centuries. It is thus, too, mayhap, with the Incarnation. Humanity is like one great human person. Its knowledge, transmitted from man to man, ripens with age. So, too, with its sentiments and desires.

When Christ sat with His disciples on that memorable night when He instituted the Holy Eucharist, He said: "With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you."[14] All those centuries God the Son had longed to be united with man in the Holy Eucharist. His divine heart yearned, as it were, for this solemn hour when He would establish the Pasch of the New Law, the Sacrifice of His Own body and blood which, thereafter,

[14] St. Luke xxii, 15.

He would eat with them when it was "fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

It was then His divine love would be poured out for man when, day by day, throughout the ages, He would lie a willing Victim on countless altars over the face of the earth. Then would God receive the true homage of man, when each day multiplied thousands of priests should lift toward Heaven the sacred body of His Own divine Son in the Sacrifice of the Mass.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Efficacy of the Mass.

THE Mass is a sacrifice of adoration, thanksgiving, prayer and expiation. The Mass is an act of adoration to God. It renders homage to Him as the Creator and Supreme Ruler of the world. It is an act of thanksgiving to God for all His benefits to the human race. Thus by adoration and thanksgiving the Mass gives glory to God. To God alone can the Sacrifice of the Mass be offered. It were an act of idolatry to offer the Mass even to saints or angels. The Mass may be offered indeed in honor of saints and angels. Yet it is not offered to them.

The Mass produces its fruits for man as an act of prayer and expiation. The Mass brings the merits and graces

of the cross into our midst. Through the Mass these fruits are applied to our souls. The Mass has its efficacy from Christ Who is both priest and victim. Hence every time Mass is celebrated Christ offers up again to His heavenly Father for us the merits of His passion and death.

If, then, Christ in the Mass begs for us supernatural graces, He is sure to obtain them. For this reason the effects of the Mass are infallibly certain. It matters not whether the celebrant be worthy or not. The Mass will infallibly produce its effect for those who have part therein, if they place no impediments in the way. The Mass produces its effects of itself and not from the merits of him who offers it.

Though the Mass is a sacrifice of expiation, it does not directly remit mortal sin. It gives the grace of repentance through which sins are

forgiven. Yet it does not follow that a sinner becomes repentant whenever he assists at the Sacrifice of the Mass. He may resist the graces given. He may not be disposed properly to receive these graces. His sins may be so grievous that more is required of him before he receives the grace of conversion.

Venial sins are remitted through the Sacrifice of the Mass. The Mass also takes away the penalties that remain after sin has been forgiven. It brings upon the altar the blood of Christ which was shed to wipe out the penalty of sin. For this reason Mass is offered for the faithful departed.

In itself the Mass is of infinite value. It has the same merit and effect as Christ's passion and death. The fruits of one single Mass would be sufficient in themselves to release all the souls from Purgatory and to bring all the graces of Heaven to earth. Yet man

is incapable of receiving an infinitude. He receives graces according to his own limited being.

God in His wisdom, has certain fixed laws according to which He distributes His grace to man. Our little intellects can not attempt to scrutinize these laws. We know, however, that God has determined certain graces for certain dispositions which He finds in the heart of man. Hence, we can never know just how much grace we receive from the Mass.

The fruits of the Mass are not lessened by the number of those who partake in them. These fruits are infinite in themselves. Hence an individual receives just as much grace from the Mass where many partake thereof as when only a few share in these fruits.

The universal Church throughout the world shares in the fruits of every Mass celebrated. This is called the

general fruit of the Mass. It is a sublime doctrine indeed. For it teaches that every member of the Church militant and every soul in purgatory are benefited every time a priest offers up the Sacrifice of the Mass. Even heretics and unbelievers receive blessings from every Mass. For every time this august Sacrifice is offered prayers are said for their conversion. Hence the more Masses celebrated in the world the more blessings and graces are brought upon the human race.

The priest may offer the Mass for particular intentions. Thus he is said to offer the special fruits of the Mass. It is the part of the priest to determine who shall receive the special fruits of the Mass. The priest who offers the Holy Sacrifice also receives special fruits. Those, too, who assist at Mass and those who unite themselves spiritually with the priest at the altar receive special fruits from the Mass.

The Sacrifice of the Mass is the central act of Christian worship. In the ages of Faith all the great works of the faithful hinged about the Mass. The altar was the pivot about which all life turned. Indeed it is upon our altars that the camp-fires of Faith are kept burning. A world without this living Sacrifice were like a lonely dwelling without heat or light.

The Mass is the great concern by which God and man deal daily together. It is the fulfilment of God's covenant with His people. Should the Christian altars be wiped from the face of the earth then might we expect to see Faith disappear. Then souls would wither away, as it were, and perish from the yearning of hearts separated from their God.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Celebration of the Mass.

PRIESTS celebrate Mass every day of the year. They are not obliged by precept to offer up the Holy Sacrifice every day. However, it is a pious custom of our age. The priest is not allowed to say more than one Mass in a day. However, by special privilege, he is allowed to say two Masses on Sundays and Holidays. This privilege is given solely for the benefit of the people. It is almost general in many countries today. In the earlier ages of the Church priests could say several Masses a day if zeal and devotion prompted them. On Christmas priests have the privilege of saying three Masses.

None other than a priest can offer

the Sacrifice of the Mass. Any priest, even though he be suspended or excommunicated, can say Mass validly at any time or in any place. However, he can not do so licitly except according to the laws of the Church. An unknown priest traveling in a strange place is not permitted to say Mass unless he present an official letter from his bishop. This letter is called a "celebret."

In the first and second centuries it might seem that bishops alone celebrated the Eucharistic Sacrifice. The priests and deacons assisted at the altar. However, there is no doubt that the priests also said Mass. The bishops were always given precedence. For this reason, perhaps, they are mentioned as the ordinary celebrants of the Mass.

The Church has taken great care to have the Holy Sacrifice offered worthily. Many laws and precepts

have been given for the guidance of priests in the celebration of the Sacred Mysteries. The celebrant of Mass must observe a strict fast from the preceding midnight. He must be in the state of grace. If he be in sin he must go to confession before he approaches the altar. He must be free from all ecclesiastical censures. He is urged to spend some time in earnest prayer before Mass. He is also urged to spend some time in thanksgiving after he has offered the Immaculate Lamb.

Priests may say Mass for any intention they choose. However, pastors are obliged to offer the Mass for their people on Sundays and Holidays. This duty also binds on certain suppressed feasts. The bishop is, likewise, bound to offer the Mass for his people. The priest may offer his Mass for any of the faithful living or dead. He may offer Mass privately for deceased non-

Catholics, if he feels that they were in good faith. He may offer the Holy Sacrifice privately for the deceased who had been taking instruction to enter the Church. He may offer the Mass privately for the conversion of heretics, atheists, unbelievers, or excommunicated persons.

The faithful make an offering to the priest when they wish him to offer the Mass for their intention. This custom has come down from the times of the Apostles. In those days the faithful made offerings of meats and eatables, during the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice. These were intended for the support of the priests. Hence, St. Paul could say: "Know you not that they who work in the holy place, eat the things that are of the holy place; and they that serve the altar, partake with the altar?"[1]

Later they began to make offerings

[1] I Epistle to the Corinthians ix, 13.

of money. About the eighth century "Mass stipends" were introduced. The priest, on receiving a certain offering, pledged himself to apply the special fruit of the Mass to the giver's intention. This custom is still in practice today. This usage has been the cause of great misunderstanding amongst many non-Catholics. It has led to the accusation that Masses are bought and sold. To sell a Mass or any sacred thing for a price would be an act of Simony. This is the sin of Simon Magus, who wished to buy from the Apostles the powers they possessed. It is punished by suspension or excommunication.

Indeed, there have been abuses committed in the matter of stipends for Masses. Cupidity found its way even into the heart of an Apostle. It was greed for money that caused Judas to fall. The Church has set strict laws about the practice of accepting

Mass stipends. Any traffic in stipends is punished by severe ecclesiastical censures. If a priest were to collect and distribute Mass stipends for a profit he would be suspended from office. A lay person would be excommunicated for the same offense.

If a priest has another priest to say the Mass, he must give him the whole offering that was made for it. There are statutes that regulate the amount of stipends. To demand more than this fixed amount is to incur severe ecclesiastical penalties. More may be asked when there is extraordinary fatigue connected with the celebration of the Mass in question. This might be a celebration at a very late hour or the like.

The priest may not receive more Mass intentions than he can satisfy within a reasonable time. He must satisfy the intention of him who makes the offering. Thus, if he neglected to

say a Mass to be offered for a sick person he could not satisfy the intention after the person died.

Foundations for Masses can be made only with the consent of the bishop. These are called founded Masses. A sum of money or some real estate is given, the income of which goes as an offering for a certain number of Masses. According to the revenue of the foundation these may be an anniversary Mass, a monthly or weekly, or even a daily Mass.

The priest at the altar fulfils the highest office that can be bestowed upon mortal man. Day by day he acts in the very name of Christ. At the altar he performs a divine action. God demands great purity and charity of him. He, above all men, needs the grace of God. He is cast into the maelstrom of a noisy world. Yet his office demands the sanctity and recollection of a hermit. He must be busy

about many things. Yet he must sit daily, in contemplation, at the feet of his Divine Master if he is to save his own soul. One of the greatest comforts a priest can have on earth is to know that his people pray often for him.

CHAPTER XXV.

The Ceremonies of the Mass.

THE priest who is about to celebrate Mass goes to the sacristy. He should have already recited at least part of the Divine Office. Then he washes his hands, saying the while: "Give, O Lord, power to my hands to cleanse away every stain, that with a pure mind and body I may be able to serve Thee."

He next prepares the Mass-book. This book is called the Missal. He puts a small folded linen cloth over the cup of the chalice. This is called the purificator, because it is used to wipe out the chalice. He places the golden plate upon the chalice. This plate is called the paten. On the paten he puts a large altar-bread. It is usually about two inches in diameter.

Then upon the paten he places the pall. This is a linen-covered card about six inches square. Upon the pall he places the chalice-veil, so as to cover the whole chalice in front. When the chalice is in place upon the altar this veil is spread out wide at the bottom so that the two sides slope toward the sides of the pall. The burse is put upon the veil. The burse contains the corporal. This is a piece of linen about eighteen inches square.

Then the priest begins to vest for Mass. He takes the amice in his hands by two corners. He kisses it in the middle where there is a little cross. He then lets it rest upon his head for a moment. Afterwards he lets it fall across his shoulders. He then tucks it in around his collar. Then bringing the strings across his breast and passing them around across the back he ties them in front. Meanwhile he says: "Put, O Lord, upon my head the hel-

met of salvation, that I may resist the attacks of the devil."

Then he puts on the long, white garment called the alb, saying: "Purify me, O Lord, and cleanse my heart, that, made pure by the blood of the Lamb, I may obtain eternal joy." He then binds the cincture around his waist, saying: "Gird me, O Lord, with the cincture of purity, and extinguish in my loins the humors of lust, that the virtue of continence and chastity may remain in me."

Now he takes the maniple. He kisses the cross and fastens it upon his left arm. He says "May I deserve, O Lord, to wear the maniple of weeping and sorrow that I may receive with rejoicing the reward of my labor." Next taking the stole, he kisses it on the cross in the middle. He then puts it around his neck crossing it over his breast. The two ends of it he fastens with the loose ends of the cincture.

The stole is a sign of priestly power. Whilst putting it on, the priest says: "Render me, O Lord, the stole of immortality which I lost by the sin of my first parents; and though I am unworthy to approach Thy Sacred Mystery, yet may I deserve eternal joy."

Finally the priest puts on the chasuble. This is the large outer vestment. There is an opening at the top where it is put over the head. It is then bound by strings, as is the amice. At the same time he says: "Lord, Who hast said: 'My yoke is sweet and my burden light,' give me the strength so to bear this that I may gain Thy grace. Amen."

Then putting on the biretta, a four-cornered cap, he takes the chalice and goes to the altar. He spreads the corporal in the middle of the altar. He opens the missal, and then goes to the foot of the altar-steps. Here he bows

down after reciting Psalm xlii and says the Confiteor. Thus before all the angels and saints he acknowledges his unworthiness to celebrate the Sacred Mysteries.

The Mass may be celebrated with diverse degrees of solemnity. It is called Low Mass when the prayers are read in a low tone by the priest. When it is sung by the priest it is called High Mass. When the priest is assisted by deacon and subdeacon it is called Solemn High Mass. A Solemn Mass sung by the bishop is called Pontifical High Mass.

After reciting the Confiteor, the priest goes up to the altar. He kisses it and says: "Take away from us, we beseech Thee, O Lord, our iniquities that we may go unto Thy Holy of Holies with pure minds, through Christ our Lord. We beg Thee, O Lord, through the merits of the saints whose

relics are here and of all the saints that thou deign to pardon all my sins."

Then the priest goes to the left side and from the Missal reads the Introit or opening prayer. Here he says the "Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison." These are Greek words meaning: "Lord have mercy on us, Christ have mercy on us." Then the Gloria is said. It is a beautiful canticle of praise to God.

Returning to the left he reads the epistle and the prayers called the Collect. Before this he has turned to the people, in the center of the altar and said: "The Lord be with you." The server or choir answers: "And with thy spirit." These words were answered formerly by the whole congregation. Going to the right side of the altar the priest reads the Gospel. The people stand, out of respect for the Word of God. Then the Credo is said. This is the Nicene Creed. At the words,

"And He became incarnate of the Virgin Mary," all kneel.

Then follows the Offertory. Here the priest offers to God the bread and wine that are to be changed into the body and blood of Christ. After the secret prayers, the Preface is said. This is a beautiful prayer said in preparation for the solemn part of the Mass. It is followed by the words: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest."[1]

The Canon of the Mass is now begun. This is called the Canon or Rule because it is the same every time Mass is said. Other parts vary with feasts and seasons.

At the beginning of the Canon the priest kisses the altar. With hands extended he begs God to accept the sacrifice he is about to offer. He begs God

[1] Isaias vi, 3.

through the Holy Sacrifice to bless the whole Church, the Pope, the bishops and all the faithful. Here he pauses to pray for those of the living whom he wishes especially to share in the fruits of the Holy Sacrifice.

He then prays for all present. Then he calls upon the Blessed Virgin Mary and upon the Apostles, whom he names. He also names other saints and martyrs. He asks God to bless us through their merits and prayers and those of all the saints. He invites them, as it were, to be present in spirit around him when he offers the Immaculate Lamb of God.

After blessing the bread and wine he begs God to hold them acceptable as about to become the body and blood of His most beloved Son, Jesus Christ, "Who the day before He suffered took bread in His holy and venerable hands, and raising His eyes to Heaven, to Thee, God the Father

almighty, giving thanks to Thee, He blessed, broke, and gave to His disciples, saying: 'Take ye and eat of this all of you. *For this is My Body.*'

"In like manner after He had supped, taking this marvelous chalice in His holy and venerable hands: likewise giving thanks to Thee, He blessed and gave to His disciples, saying: 'Take and drink ye all of this. *For this is the Chalice of My Blood, of the New and Eternal Testament;*' the mystery of faith; which is shed for you and for many to the remission of sins."

Thus takes place the Consecration. As soon as the priest has pronounced the words of Consecration he bows down in adoration. Then he elevates the sacred Host for the adoration of the people. So also he bows down after he has consecrated the chalice, which he also elevates for the adoration of the faithful.

Then he says: "As often as you

shall do this, you shall do it in memory of me." He continues the sublime prayers of the Canon. He pauses again to pray for the faithful departed. He recalls to mind those for whom he wishes to pray in a special manner. He prays for all the souls in purgatory. Afterwards follows the Pater Noster, the Our Father. After a prayer, he breaks the Sacred Host in two parts.

Then breaking a small portion from one part he drops it in the chalice. The breaking of the Sacred Host is in memory of Christ's action at the Last Supper. When the priest drops the small particle in the chalice, he makes the sign of the cross three times over the chalice and says: "May the peace of the Lord always remain with you." This is intended to remind us of Christ's three days in the tomb and then the reunion of His body and soul in the Resurrection.

Then the Agnus Dei is said. Twice

is said: "Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us." Then, "Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, give us peace." Here the priest says the three prayers in preparation for Holy Communion. Afterwards taking the Sacred Host in his left hand and striking his breast, he says thrice, "Domine, non sum dignus," Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof: but only say the word and my soul shall be healed."

Then saying: "May the body of the Lord Jesus keep my soul unto life everlasting. Amen," he receives the Sacred Host. Then he says the words of Psalm cxv, "What shall I render to the Lord, for all the things that He hath rendered to me? I will take the chalice of salvation and I will call upon the Lord." Then he says, "May the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ keep my soul unto everlasting life. Amen."

He now receives the chalice. Here the people approach to receive Holy Communion. After certain prayers are said, the priest turns and says: "Ita missa est," "Go, the Mass is ended." Then he imparts his blessing to the people, and at the end all stand whilst he reads from the beginning of the Gospel according to St. John.

The celebration of the Holy Sacrifice is surrounded by beautiful signs and symbols. The ceremonies are prayers enacted by signs. Here we worship God with our whole being. Body and mind and heart unite to pay homage to God. Life on earth is filled with signs and ceremonies. Our love and affection for one another are expressed by external signs. Our sorrow and our joy are announced in symbols. It is not strange then to find signs and symbols in our worship of God.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Liturgies.

LITURGIES are the formularies and directions for the celebration of the Holy Mass which the Church has prescribed at different times and places and which are still partly in use. . . . Though the Eucharistic Sacrifice has remained unchanged from the beginning, not only in its nature, but also in the essentials of form, however, it is quite natural that the celebration of this holy Sacrifice should have taken on diverse forms with diverse lands and peoples."[1]

The ceremonial of the Church is disciplinary. It has never been the intention of the Church to have uniformity of rite. Diverse rites for the

[1] Kirchenlexicon, vol. VIII; Liturgien, Herder, 1893.

celebration of the Sacred Mysteries have been in use since the first centuries of the Church. Yet the essentials of the Holy Sacrifice are always the same. Christ's words of institution are used in all liturgies. Nor has the Church ever desired to have the Mass said in one single language alone throughout the world. Latin is the language of the Roman patriarchate and of many other parts of the world. Yet the Roman ritual is also celebrated in ancient Slavonic.

"Mass is said in nine languages throughout the world. They are Latin, Greek, Syriac, Chaldaic, Slavonic, Wallachian, Armenian, Coptic and Ethiopic."[2] Latin is the official language of the Church. It has been used in the sacred Liturgy since the days of the Apostles. Each patriarchate ordinarily has its liturgy in one language.

[2] O'Brien, History of the Mass, 15th Edition, Benziger Bros.

The Church does not clothe her ceremonies in a dead language to make them obscure. There are no rites or ceremonies in the Church that are not intended for all. The people understand the ceremonies of the Church. Prayerbooks contain translations of the Mass. Popular works explain the language and symbols of our Ritual. It would be almost impossible for the Church to guard and regulate the Ritual if it were used in all the changing languages of the world.

After the Roman Rite, the Byzantine Rite is the most important in the Church. It is commonly known as the Greek Rite. According to this Rite, Mass is said in Greek, Arabic, Georgian, Slavonic, and Rumanian. These form five divisions of the Byzantine Rite. Many nationalities worship according to this Rite. They are ordinarily called Greek Catholics.

The "Orthodox" Greek Christians

are not Catholics. They belong to the schismatic church, which does not acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope. The Greek Catholics who use ancient Slavonic in their Liturgies are known as Ruthenians.

Those who follow the Byzantine Rite are known as the Greek Catholic Church. They use the ancient Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom and that of St. Basil. Their vestments are somewhat different in form from those of the Roman Rite. The chasuble resembles the cope used in the Roman Rite. The stole is broad. Cuffs are used instead of the maniple. A wide band takes the place of the cincture. The altar is entirely screened off by a lattice partition.

They consecrate leavened bread in the Mass. They administer Holy Communion to the laity under both species. The Sacred Species of bread are mixed with the Sacred Species of wine in the

chalice. Holy Communion is then given with a golden spoon. In making the sign of the cross, they pass the hand from the right to the left shoulder. They make a deep bow with the upper part of the body instead of genuflecting before the Blessed Sacrament. Greek Catholics are also called Greek Uniats, to distinguish them from schismatic Greeks.

The Liturgy of St. James is used by the Maronites and Melchites of the East. The Maronites derive their name from St. Maro, a holy monk of the fifth century. The Melchites have their name from the Syriac word "Malko," meaning "king." This name was given them at the Council of Chalcedon (451) to designate them as orthodox. The Syriac language which they use is the very language that our Divine Saviour spoke.

The Ambrosian Rite is used at Milan, Italy. It was established by St. Am-

brose in the fourth century. In this Rite many of the minor ceremonies are different from the Roman Rite. Those who follow this Rite baptize by immersion. The Mozarabic Liturgy was once used in Spain. The Gallic Liturgy was used in ancient Gaul. These two liturgies are no longer in use.

Three Religious Orders have their own Rites. These are: The Carthusians, the Carmelites, and the Dominicans. The Carthusians put wine and water into the chalice at the beginning of the Mass. They say the Gloria at the Epistle side of the altar. They offer the bread and wine together at the Offertory. During the Canon, they stretch out their arms in the form of a cross. At the Consecration, they do not elevate the chalice so as to be seen by the people. They do not give the blessing nor read the Gospel of St. John at the end of Mass. Besides

these, there are many other minor changes from the Roman Rite.

The Carmelites also take wine and water at the beginning of Mass. They recite Psalm xlii on their way to the altar. They make several additions in the prayers of the Mass.

The Dominicans, like the Carmelites and Carthusians, put wine and water into the chalice at the beginning of Mass. They do not say Psalm xlii at the beginning of Mass. Instead, they say some verses from Psalm cvi. They begin the Gloria at the middle of the altar, but finish it at the Epistle side. The Credo is said somewhat similarly. They read the Offertory at the Gospel side and offer the bread and wine together.

Thus the divergences of these rites from the Roman Rite are all of minor importance.

In the midst of many different Liturgies, the Mass is always the same. It

is like a person who, at diverse times and places, appears in different dress. His identity and his personality are not changed by any change in his apparel.

The Sacrifice of the Mass must be celebrated upon a consecrated altar. This must be an altar of stone. In our modern wooden altars the altar-stone is the altar proper. This altar-stone is called a portable altar. When Mass is said in private places it is always said on a portable altar.

In the altar-stone there is a miniature tomb in which the relics of some martyr are sealed. These relics must be authenticated and placed there by the bishop. The custom of placing relics in the altar arose from the fact that the tombs of the martyrs often served as altars in the Catacombs.

The altar on which the Holy Sacrifice is offered should be covered with three linen cloths. These rep-

resent the linens in which our Lord's body was wrapped when He lay in the tomb. Three cards are used on the altar at Mass. The card in the center contains the Gloria, the Credo, the Consecration and certain prayers. The card on the right contains the Gospel of St. John. That on the left contains the prayer said on taking wine and water and the Psalm said whilst washing the fingers. The right and left sides of the altar are designated from the right and left hand of the crucifix above the altar. When we face the altar, the right side of the altar is on our left hand.

During the celebration of Mass at least two pure wax candles must be kept burning. At High Mass six or more are used. A bishop uses four wax candles when he celebrates Low Mass. Undoubtedly, the use of lights during the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice is of Apostolic origin.

The candle is a symbol of Christ. The pure wax symbolizes His spotless humanity and the flame symbolizes His divinity. Christ was called the "Light of the World."[1] The pure light of the candle is also a sign of joy and a symbol of Faith.

The Missal is the book from which Mass is read. It contains all the Masses that are celebrated throughout the year. The ecclesiastical year begins with the first Sunday of Advent. Every year a calendar is compiled by the Church authorities. It designates the feasts that are to be celebrated throughout the year. This calendar is used by the priest for the purpose of knowing what Mass and office belong to each day. It is called the Ordo or Directorium.

There must be always a crucifix above the altar during the celebration of Mass. This signifies that the Mass

[1] St. John viii, 12.

is the same sacrifice as that of the Cross.

The Church gives great importance to every detail of her Liturgy. Rubrics are provided to direct the priest in the minutest details of his sacred functions. This indicates the great reverence with which the Holy Church looks upon the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

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